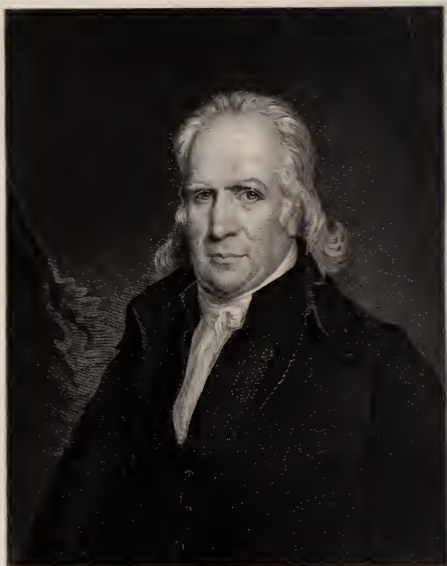


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THE AUTHOR OF THE "PRINCIPLES OF MATHEMATICS"

AND OF OTHER WORKS

THE LIFE

OF THE

REV. ROBERT R. ROBERTS,

ONE OF THE BISHOPS OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

BY

REV. CHARLES ELLIOTT, D. D.

NEW-YORK :

PUBLISHED BY G. LANE & C. B. TIPPETT,

FOR THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, AT THE CONFERENCE
OFFICE, 200 MULBERRY-STREET.

J. Collord, Printer.

1844.

Entered according to an Act of Congress, in the year 1844, by J. F. WRIGHT and L. SWORMSTEDT, in the Clerk's Office for the District Court of Ohio.

P R E F A C E .

THE following narrative is a work of no great pretensions, as far as the authorship is concerned. The reasons are the following. Whatever talent the author possesses, as a writer, it does not properly comprise the qualifications necessary for a good biographer. Besides, while preparing this volume, he had the regular duties of editor to perform, which necessarily interfered with the close attention requisite for such an undertaking. It is, also, rather hastily got up, and must, therefore, partake of the defects of all hasty publications—to which class most of the works written in this age properly belong. The author ought to have had sufficient time to re-compose the whole; but this was impossible under existing circumstances; and, therefore, his half-prepared book must be issued just as it is.

The principal reason why this unpretending volume is thus given to the public is, that the writer could not promise himself any leisure in future, even should his days be lengthened, to do more justice to the life of his venerable friend. It is, moreover, probable, that if he had not undertaken what is now imperfectly done, no other person, for want of inclination or time, would have attempted it at all. The Methodist Episcopal Church seems to have been very unfortunate in reference to her two senior Bishops, Asbury and M'Kendree, in not having the lives of these venerable men written for the benefit of posterity. This consideration has had great influence in inducing the writer to undertake the present work.

He has endeavored, to the best of his ability, to collect and arrange such facts as were within his reach, relative to the life of a very good man—an individual of great moral

and religious worth. But little comment is introduced on the facts given. The reader is, therefore, left to make his own reflections.

The sources of information for the life of Bishop Roberts were limited, and not very easy of access. The author is indebted to several friends for important matter, whose kindness is generally acknowledged in the body of the work.

After collecting and arranging all he could from his own resources and personal knowledge of the Bishop, the author proceeded to Indiana, assembled together the widow, and old acquaintances and relatives of the Bishop, and wrote down from their lips every thing they could recollect worthy of preservation. The same process was observed among his friends and neighbors at Shenango, in Mercer county, Pennsylvania, and every scrap of information which they furnished was secured. As far, therefore, as the materials go, the facts are well authenticated and may be relied on.

The author confesses, however, that there is a greater proportion of mere western pioneer incidents in the book than could be desired. There is, also, too little of religious narrative and Christian experience. But then these defects were inevitable.

The chapter on succession, which relates to ordination, and is connected with Methodist episcopacy, is a mere outline adapted to the present work, but which might be easily enlarged into a volume.

The writer believes that both Methodist episcopacy and Methodist Church polity are susceptible of as much, or rather more, Scriptural support than any other ecclesiastical regimen in the world, whether ancient or modern.

CHARLES ELLIOTT.

Cincinnati, O., April 2, 1844.

EDINBURGH
1851
THEOLOGICAL
CONTENTS

CHAPTER I.

PARENTAGE AND EARLY LIFE.

Birth and parentage—religious principles and character of his father—his mother—number and names of his brothers and sisters—Robert Richford—circumstances of his father—education of the family—education of Robert R.—becomes intoxicated during harvest—his father moves to Ligonier Valley, Pennsylvania, in 1785—state of religion in the Valley—conversion of Abel Fisher, sen.—religious instruction of the family—effects of the new country on Robert R. and the family—Methodist preachers visit the Valley in 1788—prejudices of Mr. Roberts against them—effect of their preaching on Mrs. Roberts and young Robert R.—and on the members of the family—they send John to quarterly meeting—information on his return—Robert R. overhears his sister, Elizabeth, pray—effect on his mind—his sisters, Sarah, Elizabeth and Esther unite with the Church—prayer in the family—industry and religious state of Robert—improves his mind in reading—family regulations during religious meetings by Sarah—breaks his leg—becomes catechist for the children—receives the witness of his acceptance—preaches to Lewis—backwardness in uniting with the Church—incident at quarterly meeting—union with the Church—his clothing—makes tar to purchase better—goes to school—scutches flax for boarding—Irish schoolmasters—incident at school—interview with his old schoolmaster in 1835.....13-32.

CHAPTER II.

SETTLEMENT OF SHENANGO.

Privileges of first settlers in Pennsylvania—R. R. sets out in 1796 for Shenango—his companions—character of a hunter—they all go to hunt—Thomas Roberts and William M'Lean return—Robert R., Caughey and Hubanks proceed—arrival at Franklin—then at Meadville—their camp near Georgetown—proceed to Shenango—get lost—encamp at Salcm—their supper—difficulty in returning—they select land and commence improvements—Robert R.'s provisions and money run out—implements of cooking—their first crop—R. R. kills a deer—they attempt to find Coneaut Lake—distress of his mind and mode of relief—he sets out in June for Ligonier—arrival at Franklin—hires to

a captain of a boat—goes to Pittsburg—arrival at home—is exercised about preaching—returns to Shenango in the spring of 1797—the company and incidents of the journey—they buy sugar on Sunday—the sin of this act—his provisions run out—is reduced to great want—return of his brothers, and arrival of his sister Elizabeth—his house becomes the centre of the neighborhood—his crop—he and his sister spend the winter in Shenango—commences hunting, and want of success—shoots a deer and racoons—kills a wild-cat.....32-54.

CHAPTER III.

RELIGION PLANTED IN SHENANGO.

Dangerous rencountre with a deer—fears of Elizabeth and their cause—her mode of calling her brother and his reply—his late stay one night and her alarm—arrival of Caughey, Esther, his father, John and Lewis—exercises of his mind and spiritual prospects—returns to Ligonier—delivers his first pulpit exhortation—proceeds with a perogue from Connelsville to Shenango—dangers of the voyage and adventures to Shenango—sugar-making—arrival of the perogue—R. R. and Lewis go to Ligonier, and return with his sisters, Nancy, Sarah and Sophia, and grandfather, Richford—crossing of Wolf Creek—mode of traveling—peopling of the settlement—its religious prospects—the Rev. Jacob Gurwell—Rev. Thomas M'Clelland—formation of the first class in Shenango in 1796—R. R. Roberts the first leader, and their religious meetings—marriage of Elizabeth Roberts—he hunts during the winter—goes to Ligonier with his furs—difficulties in settling the country.....54-72.

CHAPTER IV.

CALL TO THE MINISTRY.

Marriage of R. R. Roberts—he, his wife and Lewis set out for Shenango—incidents of the way—the cabin in which they lived—its furniture—their provisions—he and Sarah Roberts visit Ligonier—continues leader—hunting—its perils—sugar-making—a dangcrous predicament—he makes poetry—a specimen—is exercised about preaching, and preaches in the woods—effect of his mental distress on his conduct—not an indolent man—the mean between commencing too soon and too late—death of Mr. Richford—R. R. Roberts' first license—death of his father—solicited to preach by Mr. M'Clelland—M'Clelland's dream—R. R. Roberts exhorts at watch-night at the request of Rev. James Quinn—his first sermon in 1802—is licenscd to preach, and recommended to the Baltimore conference—Rev. James Quinn's letter.....73-100.

CHAPTER V.

ENTRANCE ON THE MINISTRY.

Disposition of his personal property at Shenango—his outfit for itinerancy—true spirit of itinerancy—departure for Shenango—crossing the mountains—travels Carlisle circuit—afflicted with the small-pox—then the measles—is affected with the shouting in meetings—quarterly meeting at Carlise—Mr. Wall—example of Mr. Roberts' great modesty—his pecuniary supplies and poverty—stationed on Montgomery circuit in 1803—the first camp meeting in Maryland—the German Methodists—usage among the Baptists—is ordained deacon in 1804—copy of his parchment—steps of graduating in the Methodist ministry—excellency of the plan—he is stationed on Frederick circuit in 1804—attends General conference—remarks on the proceedings of that body.....100-123.

CHAPTER VI.

CONTINUANCE IN THE ITINERANCY.

His economical mode of living—visit to his aunt—the German Methodists—Rev. John Everhart—incident at Harper's Ferry at a quilting party—death of Mrs. Roberts' mother—they travel to Shenango, and Mrs. Roberts spends the winter there—necessity of their economy—appointed to Shenango circuit—preaches at Pittsburg—the "falling" among the Presbyterians—conversation with a lady on the subject—transferred to Erie circuit, after six months, for his accommodation—commences building a mill, and the reasons for this—remark on his conduct by a zealous person—his own comment on the subject—remarks on ministerial support and ministerial devotedness—conclusion of the year—ordained elder in 1806—appointed to Erie circuit—extends his labors to New York state—preaches at Meadville—incident at Coneaut and entertainment for the night—another at Lexington—rencountre with Rev. Mr. M'Lean—his double cabin at Shenango..... 123-146.

CHAPTER VII.

ENTRANCE ON THE EPISCOPACY.

Appointed to Pittsburg circuit—state of the society in Pittsburg—his success in regulating them—character of a preacher sent on by the presiding elder—caution to be observed in receiving strange preachers—remains at home during conference—he and Wm. Page censured for non-attendance on their circuits—injustice of their censure—appointed to West Wheeling circuit—goes to General conference—travels to Baltimore on one dollar—incidents on the way—place of lodging at Baltimore—the presiding elder question—the restrictive

regulations—their history—Bishop Asbury changes him to Baltimore—perplexity of his mind on the occasion—advice of Mrs. Roberts—reception at Baltimore—difficulty with Mr. M'Caine—appointment at Alexandria—interview with the President—visits Shenango—takes George Roberts with him—stationed in Philadelphia—visits the west—shooting match at Orleans, Indiana—is presiding elder of Schuylkill district—presides in the Philadelphia conference—is elected Bishop in 1816—perplexity of his mind on the occasion—advice of Rev. James Quinn—copy of his ordination parchment—observations on it..... 146-170.

CHAPTER VIII.

DUTIES OF BISHOPS.

Constituting a Methodist Bishop—his election—consecration—ordination in the Methodist Episcopal Church is presbytrial—character of a Methodist Bishop—Scriptural authority for Bishops—duties of a Methodist Bishop—to preside in conferences—to station preachers—how far the wills of people and preachers are consulted—fundamental principles of stationing—of the power or duties of Bishops—the wishes of people and preachers liable to great qualification—presiding elders advise with and assist the Bishops—all have the privilege of petitioning—great variety of petitions—some petition for talented preachers—others for single preachers—for return of preachers—for good disciplinarians—for change after conference—on account of family afflictions—specimens of these—parents and near relatives petition—specimens of these—remonstrating—transferring—specimens of these—there is a real compact between preachers and people—opposition to petitions—a specimen—petition of colored people—one from a whole community—petitions from individuals not right—regulations of the Wesleyan Methodists—the American plan preferable—another duty of a Bishop is to receive, change and suspend preachers—guard of abuse here—to travel at large—to oversee the spiritual and temporal concerns of the Church—to ordain ministers—to decide questions of law—a Bishop is accountable to the General conference—when he ceases to travel he cannot exercise his episcopal duties—note from the Discipline of 1792..... 170-201.

CHAPTER IX.

GENUINE EPISCOPACY.

General remarks on succession—I. *The true succession* is not local or personal—it requires truth of doctrine—sound moral principles—and true worship—some are ineligible to the minister's office; namely, the wicked—heretics—Simonists—and all bad men—true ministers

must possess ministerial qualifications—general rules—and inferences—ordination defined—its form—the proper candidate—course of probation—recommendation of the people—choice by the ministry—ceremonies—the ordainers or consecrators—superstitious views concerning ordination—sum of the argument—II. *Succession of the Church of Rome*—supremacy of the Pope is its basis—succession through Popes is uncertain—often interrupted—their ordinations null generally in selecting ineligible candidates—by heresies—by Simony—wicked measures in appointing Popes—sum of the argument—the bishops of the Church of Rome not the successors of the apostles—nor their clergy—nor their people—nor their Church—Christianity preserved independently of the Church of Rome—*Succession of the Church of England*—bishops and elders the same—defects of the English Church—the power of the Parliament—and of the king—the Church subject to the state—appointment of bishops by the crown—alliance of Church and state—their bishops compared with the primitive bishops—character of the clergy—and their people—some redeeming qualities—the ordinations of the English Church are null, or vitiated, by their descent from Rome—instances given—their ordinations are null, according to their principles, by admitting Presbyterian ordinations—is interrupted in the case of the non-jurors—in its connection with the state—by ordaining ineligible persons—*Succession of the Protestant Episcopal Church*—its foundation laid contrary to their true principles—the English Church conveyed to them an unscriptural ordination—through the British Parliament and king—it is defective—and null—it is partly derived from the non-juring bishops—invalidated by their baptism—great deficiencies of their ordination—concluding remarks—III. *Ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church*—Methodist ministers have the true qualifications—exercise the powers—and perform the duties of true ministers—the Methodist Episcopal Church—Mr. Wesley was their bishop—was received as such by the American Methodists—was providentially, Scripturally and ecclesiastically called to act for the Methodist Episcopal Church—objections answered—Scriptural character of the Methodist Episcopal Church201-255.

CHAPTER X.

REMOVAL TO INDIANA.

Survey of the preceding chapters—Bishop Roberts' recourse to prayer—his retiring character—consultation about the place of his residence—his poverty—he and Mrs. Roberts determine to live at Shenango—their reasons for this choice—they set out from Baltimore to cross the mountains—ascending the first mountain—descent of Laurel Hill—arrival at Shenango—attends the Natchez conference—is sick

among the Indians—Mrs. Roberts moves to the double cabin—condition of the cabin—deficiency of biographical material—his deficient education—he and Mrs. Roberts visit Indiana—hunting—the ague—lies out all night on his journey to the Virginia conference—Bishop Roberts and the young preacher—Mrs. Roberts and he visit Philadelphia on horse-back—she returns alone—incidents on the way—he moves to Indiana—his reasons for doing so—his journey to Indiana—arrival and first night's adventures—fixing their new house—its furniture—his poverty and means of getting bread—clearing—planting—domestic economy—his visit to Fincastle, Virginia..... 256-274.

CHAPTER XI.

EPISTOLARY CORRESPONDENCE.

Deficiency in historical matter—character of his correspondence—brought home sick in 1820—sermon at Chillicothe in 1821—letter to Mrs. Roberts—Rev. W. Ledbetter's letter—letter from Bishop George—pastoral address—Bishop Roberts and the tavern-keeper—letters from Bishop Roberts—letter from Wm. Stevenson—the Bishop and an Englishman—his gift to the New Orleans Church—shipwreck on his passage home—Rev. Alexander M'Caine and Methodist Episcopacy—Mr. Dixon's opinion of Methodist Episcopacy—letter from Bishop M'Kendree—from Bishop Soule—General conference of 1828—letter from Bishop Soule on the death of Bishop George—Bishop Roberts crossing the Miami—incident at St. Louis—letters from Bishop Soule—letters from Rev. C. Holliday and Bishop M'Kendree—letter from Jesse Walker—letter from Mrs. Hedding—letter from Bishop M'Kendree—M'Kendree on trying members—sickness of Bishop Roberts at Louisville—letter from Bishop Soule—letter to his wife—General conference of 1836..... 275-332.

CHAPTER XII.

CLOSING LABORS.

State of Bishop Roberts' health—plan of episcopal visitation—industry of Bishop Roberts when at home—meeting of the Bishops in New York, May 24th, 1838—Bishop Roberts made a life member of the American Bible Society—urged by the Indiana conference to change his residence—attendance of Bishop Roberts at the Pittsburg conference in 1841—letter from Bishop Morris—travels of Methodist Bishops—Bishop Roberts visits the Indians—preparations for the journey—arrives at the Choctaw agency—at Fort Smith—at Fort Leavenworth—a thunder storm—the French trader—Delaware Indian and the New Testament—breaking of the carriage—arrives at the Indian Manual Labor School—death of Rev. William Johnson—arrives at

home—estimation in which he was held by the Indiana conference—his patronage to the Asbury Indiana University—his portrait taken at Greencastle—visits his brother, Lewis, at Ashgrove, Illinois—letter to James Roberts—attends the Rock River conference at Chicago—and the Illinois conference at Winchester—is much indisposed—attends the Missouri conference—his touching address to the conference—interest of the preachers of this conference—attends the Arkansas conference—his contemplated visit to the Texas conference—resolutions of that conference—is unable to attend its session—his travels during the year—calls on the Bishops to preach—specimens given—salary of Bishop Roberts—his liberality—expenses peculiar to the episcopacy—labors of the Bishops—comparison between the present and former Bishops.....332-365.

CHAPTER XIII.

DEATH AND CHARACTER.

State of his health in the winter of 1842, and the deficiency of natural remedies in his case—attends meeting on Christmas eve at Lawrenceport—death of George Roberts, and his last letter—attends a meeting at Bedford on New Year's eve—statement of his remarks there—returns home on Tuesday and gets a cold—preaches his last sermon for Mr. Mapes, on Sunday, January 8th—his theme was holiness in his two last sermons—attends a temperance meeting—is affected with a sense of his approaching end—his asthma increases—failure of a physician to attend—arrival of his brother Lewis—increase of the disease on February 22d—account of it by Dr. Cavins—visit by Rev. Mr. Terrell—visit of Rev. E. R. Ames—Rev. Mr. Terrell's second visit—pious sentiments and feeling of the Bishop—he makes his will—conversation with Mr. M'Donald—he grieves because he could not attend the Texas conference—is affected with slight delirium—his last social meeting—his last audible prayer—his state previous to his death—his death—account of him by the Rev. Mr. Prossor—remark of his wife on his dying at home—his funeral sermon—retired spot of his burial—not his wish to be buried there—great respect paid to his memory—resolutions and funeral sermon at Cincinnati—similar exercises at Dayton, Ohio; Louisville, Kentucky; Madison and New Albany, Indiana—resolutions of the Indiana conference on removing his remains to Greencastle—reinterment on January 18th, 1844—Professor Larrabee's discourse on the occasion—his character by Rev. L. L. Hamline—conclusion.....365-407.



LIFE OF BISHOP ROBERTS.

CHAPTER I.

PARENTAGE AND EARLY LIFE.

ROBERT RICHFORD ROBERTS was born August 2d, 1778, in Frederick county, Maryland. His father, Robert Morgan Roberts, was a native of Cecil county, Eastern Shore of Maryland. By occupation he was a farmer, and was in moderate circumstances, having had to commence business for himself, without any aid from his father, John Roberts. For although his father left, at his death, a considerable estate, it was, according to the laws then in existence in Maryland, held by the eldest son, to the exclusion of all the other children.

In regard to his religion, Robert Morgan Roberts was educated in the principles of the Church of England, of which he was a regular member; and was zealously attached to her articles, homilies and liturgy. He was remarkable for his gentleness and kindness of nature, and was upright in his conduct towards all men.

He took an active part in the Revolutionary struggle. At the call of his country he became a Revolutionary soldier, and was engaged in the battles of Brandywine, Germantown and White Plains.

The name of Bishop Roberts' mother was Mary Richford. She was the only daughter of Thomas and Esther Richford, and was born at Georgetown Cross Roads, Kent county, Maryland. She was of low stature, was active, and buoyant and lively in her disposition.

The Bishop's great grandfather, on his father's side, was

from Wales; and his maternal great grandfather was probably from Ireland.

His mother was only sixteen years of age at the time of her marriage. She was the mother of thirteen children, six sons and seven daughters, eleven of whom lived to years of maturity. The following are the names of the eleven, with the time of their birth and death as far as can be ascertained:

John, born January 13th, 1763—died January 20th, 1812; Sarah, born June 5th, 1767; Mary; Thomas; Elizabeth, born February 15th, 1771; Esther, July 25th, 1776; Robert Richford, August 2d, 1778; Lewis, about 1780; Priseilla, May 20th, 1783; Naney, February 14th, 1785; Sophia, May 17th, 1787.

Robert Richford was the third son of that name, the other two having died while young. One was drowned in a spring, while quite small, and the other died with the dysentery. The mother was so intent on continuing the Christian name of her husband, and her own maiden name, in the family, that she persisted in attaching them to the son that was born after the death of the two just mentioned.

The father of Robert R. Roberts, being left dependent on his own efforts, and having a large family to provide for, was unable to bestow much education on his children. For though his mother was an only child, and although her father was in affluent circumstances, especially in early life, it does not appear that any amount of property was realized as a maternal inheritance. We gather this from the following facts:—There is no account of any special aid from this source, and her father depended principally on the Roberts family, in old age, for care and support. She was raised, however, in affluent circumstances; so that the inconveniences of less prosperous days, after she had become the mother of a numerous family, so affected her health as to be the source of much bodily affliction.

On this account, the children's education consisted only of the rudiments of reading, writing and arithmetic, which, in those days, formed the entire course of common school instruction. The elder members of the family, however, were more favored in this respect than the younger, as their condition at that time was more advantageous for the acquisition of learning than it was subsequently.

Robert Richford was put to school when between four and five years of age. Before seven, he was able to read the Bible very intelligibly. He was also instructed in the catechism and prayers of the Church of England, and had been baptized in infancy, by a minister of that Church. At a very early age, religious impressions were made on his mind in reading the Bible, especially the subject of the resurrection, as set forth in the book of Revelation.

At this time, during harvest and on public occasions, much use was made of rum. His father, in common with others, kept it in his house. One day, when Robert Richford was about five years of age, his mother went with the usual afternoon "piece" to the harvest field, and left him in the charge of his sister, Esther, who was about two years older. Esther went into the cellar, drew some rum, and gave him to drink at pleasure. Without knowing the strength of the liquor, he drank plentifully, which so affected him, that he shortly became insensible. His sister was so alarmed, that she entirely forgot the barrel, and the rum, running out, very soon covered the floor to a considerable extent. When the mother arrived at the house, it was with difficulty he could be brought to a state of sensibility. This so affected young Robert, that he formed the strongest dislike to spirituous liquors of any kind; and in after life he observed the most rigid abstinence from all intoxicating drinks. His own narrow escape, the evil effects of spirits on others, as well as a strong moral sense of right and wrong, made him a practical "totaller," even

until he closed his life. This sad disaster is only a specimen of the innumerable evils accruing to families, from keeping spirituous liquors in the house as a beverage. For if only the older members of a family use intoxicating drinks even sparingly, the younger may use them to a more injurious extent; and all, or most of them, may lay the foundation for becoming confirmed drunkards, by taking them either occasionally or statedly, in moderate quantities, whether unmixed or diluted with water, or some other liquid.

In the year 1785, just after the close of the Revolutionary war, Mr. Roberts sold his property in Maryland, and moved with his family to Ligonier Valley, Westmoreland county, Pennsylvania. The country was then new, with scarcely any Churches or schools. The father and such of the sons as were able to work were closely engaged in opening a farm. The mother became very much afflicted with rheumatism and other infirmities, besides having the care of a large family of ten children, the eldest about twenty-two years of age, and the youngest an infant.

The people of the Valley, as far as they were religious, were generally Presbyterians and Seceders. Mr. Roberts seldom worshiped with them, as he could never be satisfied with their doctrines. And when his youngest daughter was born, such were his prejudices, that she was taken twenty miles to be baptized. Although there were several Churches of Presbyterians and Seceders in the Valley at that time, there was clearly very little experimental religion. Indeed it was not unusual for some of the elders of the Churches to become intoxicated. The person who appeared to enjoy religion beyond others was a Quaker. He was regarded as a most singular character, because he would not take any part in the customary diversions of the country, dancing, balls, and such like. This man, whose name was Abel Fisher, united about thirty years afterwards with

the Methodist Episcopal Church. Though of very strict morals, he seemed to be deficient in experimental religion. By the preaching of the Gospel, he became deeply concerned about his eternal destiny, but was very unwilling to receive baptism. When convinced of the propriety of the ordinance, however, he became urgent to be baptized; and as there was no preacher in the neighborhood at the precise time, rather than wait any longer, he set out towards Uniontown, a distance of over forty miles, after the Rev. James Riley, who had proceeded for that place a few hours before. He followed Mr. Riley on horse-back, at a rapid gait, and overtook him at the Youghaganey, at or near where Connelville now stands. He hailed the preacher, while yet at a distance, and told the cause of his haste. After some conversation, Mr. Riley baptized him *at the Youghaganey*. This was the more remarkable, as he had peculiarly strong prejudices against Mr. Riley; but when his mind became duly interested, his prejudices gave way, and he was baptized by the man who formerly was by no means his favorite. He lived a very devoted life ever after, and died an ornament to the Methodist Episcopal Church and to our common Christianity.

The principles of religion as understood by Mr. and Mrs. Roberts, were inculcated on the children with some industry. They were orderly, conscientious people; but rested in the outward forms of religion, without knowing experimentally their spirituality, or deep design. For several years after their removal to Ligonier, they were without any religious privileges, except those of a domestic kind, such as reading the word of God and a few religious books, the observance of the Sabbath with moderate strictness, and occasionally on the Sabbath some forms of prayer. Mr. Roberts had been strictly warned by his minister, before he left Maryland, against any religious alliances with the sectarians, especially the Methodists,

whom he represented as peculiarly dangerous religious associates. The family, as they grew up, became fond of the customary amusements of the times and place, dancing and such like; the natural result of which was, that they had not much regard for the spiritualities of religious duties, or religious services. This remark applies particularly to the older members of the family.

The removal of Mr. Roberts to Ligonier was a check to the education of his rising family; as the newness of the country and his limited means did not allow him to expend money for their instruction; nor could their time be spared from the demands on their services in clearing land and providing for their sustenance. Young Robert R. was only seven years of age when his parents moved to Westmoreland. At this tender age he was industriously engaged in the common work of clearing land. There were no schools then within reach, to which he could be sent; and if there had been, he had not the command of his time to attend them. His mother became much afflicted, and also burdened with the cares of a large family. On account of these circumstances, and partly through the carelessness and negligence incident to boys of his age, in a short time he could scarcely read or even spell with ease. But when his mother's health returned, she put him to his books again, so that he soon regained what he had lost, and thus could again read the Bible, whose pages he continually perused. Except what he learned by reading in the family, his education stopped here, even up to the eighteenth year of his age, when he received two or three months' schooling, of which we will give an account on a future page. At that time he was a boy of superior capacity, and his progress in knowledge was great, considering his circumstances.

In the year 1788, when Robert R. Roberts was about ten years of age, the Methodist preachers went to the

neighborhood where his father resided, and preached within half a mile of his father's house. The preachers then on the circuit (Redstone) were Jacob Surton and Lasley Matthews. The elder brothers and sisters of Robert R. frequently heard them, and very often amused themselves by making remarks upon the sermons and meetings. Mr. Robert M. Roberts would not hear those preachers at all, as he believed them to be the false prophets; and he adhered to his determination until some of his family joined the Methodist Episcopal Church. His prejudices arose, as before stated, from the advice which his minister had given him concerning them while he resided in Maryland, just before he moved to Ligonier. After they had preached sometime in the neighborhood, Mrs. Roberts went to hear them, and took Robert R. with her. The preacher who addressed them on that occasion was the Rev. James O. Cull. He was not then a regular itinerant preacher; but was sent to fill the place of one of the preachers on the circuit. His text was in the third chapter of Zephaniah, eighth verse, "Therefore wait ye upon me," &c. He was a "son of thunder." The sermon was an alarming one, and produced great effect upon the congregation. * It so deeply affected Mrs. Roberts that she wept much. It also affected, to no small extent, young Robert R.; and had he not been under the influence of prejudice, he would have been much more affected. He believed his father knew the character of those preachers; and he also considered them false prophets. Still, with all these prejudices, the sermon seemed to him to be true; and he concluded if it was true, both he and the other members of the family must change their course of life, or be lost for ever. On that very day the first Methodist society in that neighborhood was formed; several joining at the time. Mrs. Roberts would probably have united with them, had she not known the prejudices of her hus-

band. It is believed that she knew something of experimental religion, as her mother had heard Whitefield, and was, there is reason to think, converted under his ministry. Some, however, supposed that Whitefield's preaching had thrown the mother of Mrs. Roberts into a state of mental derangement. Mrs. Roberts did not return again to the meetings for sometime, owing to the objections of Mr. Roberts and other members of the family: neither did young Robert R. attend them for more than a year.

With brief intervals, however, the other members of the family continued to attend, and made their observations on the preaching and meetings as usual. Many things were said against class meetings and love feasts, though none of the family had ever been at any of these meetings. Shortly after, a quarterly meeting was to be held twenty or thirty miles distant. As much had been said, by way of disparagement, against class meetings and love feasts, the eldest daughters of Mr. Roberts earnestly requested their brother, John, who was always a very serious man, to go with some young women, members of the Church, and attend the love feast, and bring back an account of what might transpire there. Accordingly he went; although the young women, knowing his errand, and his indefinite views concerning religion, would rather at that time have been without his company. The sisters waited impatiently for his return; and their anxiety was much increased when they found he staid beyond the appointed time. Many were the reasonings concerning the cause of his delay. On his return, they asked him what he had seen and heard—what the love feast was like—what they did there, and so on. To their great astonishment, he had but little to say, appeared very grave, and finally remarked, that he believed the Methodists were good people. This was strange news to Robert R., as he had formerly heard his brother John frequently say very severe

things against them. The brothers and sisters continued to go to the meetings, but made fewer remarks than formerly. Robert R., and his father and mother, did not attend them for sometime after.

By this time, Robert R. began to be able to assist his father to a considerable extent on the farm. Returning home one evening from the labors of the day, he heard, at some distance in the woods, an unusual sound. At first he knew not what it was, but supposed it to be a wild beast, as such were then numerous in that country. He listened a while, and then slowly drew near the sound, until he ascertained it to be a human voice. Having approached quite close, he found it proceeded from his sister Elizabeth, who was much engaged in prayer. He listened attentively to her supplications, and found she was pleading with God to have mercy on her for Christ's sake, and pardon her sins. This prayer alarmed him very much. He wondered what unheard of, enormous sin she could have committed that seemed so deeply to affect her; as he thought no ordinary sins could be the occasion of such great agony of soul. After staying a short time, he returned without interrupting her, and kept the matter in his own breast, not even informing any one of the family. The prayer of Elizabeth made a very deep impression on his mind. She was about seven years older than he, and withal a person of excellent temper, and was his favorite sister.

Not long after this, he ascertained that his three elder sisters, Sarah, Elizabeth and Esther, had united with the Methodist Episcopal Church; and that his eldest sister, Sarah, was ready on all occasions to pray in public when called on. She affectionately told her father that he ought to have family prayer. This had been frequently attended to on the Sabbath, but not regularly. Mrs. Roberts was much grieved at the zeal of Sarah in reference to family prayer;

as Mr. Roberts was esteemed by all a good Christian, being a man of strict morality. The advice, however, of Sarah came in place, as she was the eldest sister, and, owing to the feebleness of her mother, the care and management of the family principally devolved upon her. The father yielded to her advice, called the family together, took his prayer book, and read prayers. But she was not satisfied, and told him he ought to pray without his book. He then wrote a form of prayer, and used it instead of the printed forms. But still she was not satisfied. He then said to her, "My child, pray yourself." She did so, and kept up family prayer for sometime, some of the rest assisting her. Sarah possessed an unusual gift in prayer: few, whether ministers or laymen, were her equals in this respect. Some of the children having joined the Church, Mrs. Roberts also united, and in a short time two of her sons, and her husband also.

Shortly after some of the members of the family had joined the Church, Robert R. attended regularly, and was often deeply affected. He prayed in secret, and earnestly desired the Lord to have mercy upon him. For some cause the preaching was soon moved to his father's house, and continued there for many years, or until the family moved away to Shenango. He now had the counsel, prayers and instructions of the preachers, as they took great pains to inform his mind and do him good.

As he was the principal aid of his father on the farm, he was kept constantly at work. He was able-bodied for his age, and he willingly assisted his father in every thing that was to be done. His younger brother, Lewis, was too small to aid much, and withal of feeble constitution, so that, for the most part, he attended school. His elder brothers, Thomas and John, had arrived to maturity, and were employed in providing for themselves. On these accounts, Robert was the principal male support of the family; and

he well demeaned himself in the relation in which he stood to them. His clothing was the common back-woods costume: the broad rimmed, low crowned, white wool hat, the hunting shirt of tow linen, buck-skin breeches, and moccasins or coarse shoes. As a specimen of his industry, take the following: A quarterly meeting was held at his father's house. As many came from a great distance in these days to such meetings, those who lived in the neighborhood entertained them, so that their cabins were well filled. The house where the quarterly meeting was held usually had a double portion. It should also be observed, that then there were no regularly built meeting-houses. Of course, one single room served for place of worship, kitchen, dining-room, parlor, and sleeping room. Robert R. attended to every person who came to his father's house. He was closely employed in taking care of the horses, and waiting on the people, and doing every thing necessary on such occasions. In short, he did all that the most sedulous servant man could do at the house of his employer. This gave occasion to a person who came from a distance to ask the sisters, "What rough looking hired man is that with the hunting shirt on?"

Every moment that could be saved from the labors of the farm, was industriously spent in reading and devotion. He perused with great care Fletcher's Appeal, and also his Checks, together with other excellent works, so that he became well instructed in the doctrines of Methodism, and thoroughly confirmed in their truth.

As their house was the place of worship, the children enjoyed the advantages of class meetings and prayer meetings, as well as preaching, together with the conversation and instructions of the preachers in the family circle. Sarah Roberts, the eldest sister, required Robert, Lewis, and the younger children, during class and other religious meetings, to sit together on a bench behind the large table; and

she watched them with maternal and Christian solicitude, in order to see that all were present, and that they behaved themselves in a proper manner during the various exercises. This regulation had an excellent effect upon their minds and morals, and laid the foundation of their future excellent religious life.

Before Robert R. experienced religion, while engaged one day in making sugar, about three or four miles from his father's house, he broke his leg. It was occasioned by the dangerous work of felling a tree, against which another had fallen. A small limb or branch struck his leg and broke it. Mr. Rogers, his brother-in-law, brought him home on horseback, with his broken leg dangling at the horse's side. His mother was much alarmed on witnessing the sight, and she was but little relieved by the remark of Mr. Rogers, who, to divert the agonies of the afflicted mother, observed, that "Robert would yet ride in a carriage, and she would see it." It was broken a second time, when it was nearly well, by his turning around in the door, with great haste, on seeing some strangers approach the house. This temporary affliction gave him time for serious reflection and reading, which he improved to great account, so that this disaster was ultimately more a gain than a loss.

Such was his improvement in religious knowledge, as well as his sedate religious conduct, that when the preaching was moved to his father's house, and before he experienced religion, he was chosen, by the Rev. T. M'Clennahan, catechist over the children of the neighborhood. Their names were recorded in a book, they were met weekly, and learned the *Instructions for Children*. This admirable plan was prosecuted with great order and industry by the preachers of those days; and probably the preachers of the present day do not excel them in these respects, if, indeed, they equal them.

Such was his excellent moral conduct, and such his

attainments in divine things, that nothing seemed to be wanting, in order to make him a Christian, but the evidence of his acceptance with God, through the merits of Christ. This was graciously bestowed on him in the month of May, 1792, in the fourteenth year of his age. We will give the particulars of this important event as written in the brief narrative of his life by the President of Asbury University, from the Bishop's own mouth, in the summer of 1842: "One day about sunrise in the month of May, I was in a corner of the fence praying, when, I humbly trust, my sins were pardoned, and God, for Christ's sake, accepted me. Before that time, I had frequently had sweet intimations of the goodness and mercy of the Lord. My heart was tender, and I felt as if I could love God and his people. But yet, until that morning, my mind was not at rest. Then every thing seemed changed. Nature wore a new aspect, as I arose and went to my work with cheerfulness; though, I own, I did not then know whether I had received all that I should look for in conversion. I never had such alarming views of my condition as some have experienced. My mind was gradually opened; and although I had always led a moral life, I firmly believed that my heart must be changed. Owing to my youth, I cannot now remember the precise day of my conversion, though the scene, as it occurred that morning, has ever been deeply printed on my memory. It happened in my fourteenth year, A. D. 1792."

Before he joined the Church, and after he experienced religion, he was very much exercised concerning the great work of preaching. He would frequently ponder over in his mind the outlines of sermons; and sometimes he would give vent to his impressions by actually preaching aloud, either alone or to some children. One day he thus employed himself in preaching to Lewis, his younger brother, in a grove of plum trees, not very far from his

father's house, though sufficiently remote for his voice to be unheard by any in or about the house. He continued so long in his discourse, that Lewis began to be troubled at the delay. It was on the Sabbath day too, and it encroached on the regular hour of meeting at his father's house, during which time all the children were expected to be in their places on the long bench before alluded to. Nevertheless, it appears that Lewis listened to his brother until he finished his discourse. Lewis immediately started for home, in order to comply with his obligation of being in his place during religious services. He arrived a few minutes before the conclusion of the meeting; and when it was over, he stood crying at the door, excusing himself for his absence, by saying, "Bob preached so long among the plum bushes, that I could not get away."

After he had experienced religion, he felt himself identified with the Methodists, and was with them in all their meetings, both public and private. Nevertheless, such was his backwardness of disposition and demeanor, as well as his conscientious scruples, that he feared to unite with the Church, lest, being young, he might go astray, and thereby bring reproach on the cause of religion. Another reason why he deemed it advisable to delay, was that his father thought it best for him to defer so important a step till he was a little older. In consequence of this delay, the preachers conversed with him on the subject. Some used great kindness and forbearance towards him, being influenced by the consideration of his youth, and his excellent moral and religious character. Others again used great plainness, and sometimes proceeded to employ what his tender and youthful mind considered severity. An occurrence took place at this time, which tried him exceedingly. He walked ten miles on Sunday morning to attend love feast at a quarterly meeting. He was clothed in the best he had, which was only his tow hunting shirt, and the correspond-

ing parts of his back-woods dress. The preacher, who was withal well acquainted with him, refused to let him into the love feast, until all the others had got in that he intended to admit: he then permitted him to enter. What the reasons of the preacher were, we have not particularly learned. Probably he thought that it would serve as a reason to impress him with the importance of such religious privileges; or that as he was not yet a member, the rule of Discipline would not admit him; or it might be that the whole was rather an undesigned incident which occurred in the crowd of various applicants for admission. Be this as it may, the circumstance injured very much the feelings of young Roberts, so that the meeting did him very little good, as he at that time supposed. Nevertheless he felt no prejudice against the Church on this account. He sat behind the door in the most retired part of the house, reflecting on his lot.

After this preacher and his colleague left the circuit, their places were supplied by Messrs. Bell and Bunn, who seemed to understand the case of young Roberts better than their predecessors. He evidently needed much encouragement, rather than reproof or the adoption of any severe measure. They treated him with peculiar kindness, and used every opportunity to encourage and instruct him. He was at meeting on all occasions, and attended class most punctually, it being still held at his father's house. One day Mr. Bell meeting the class, Robert was the last to whom he spoke, for he always sat back towards the door: after Mr. Bell had spoken to him, he turned to the class-leader, and asked him if there were any objection to brother Robert's joining the Church on probation. The leader replied that he knew of no objection: neither did the other members of the class know of any. Indeed he was highly prized by all as a very pious boy, whose religious experience was remarkably clear, whose life was unblamable, and

whose humility, gentleness and unassuming pretenses gave him favor in the sight of all men. The preacher then put down his name on the class-book. Young Robert R. thought, that as the preacher had thus recorded his name, it should stay there; and he often said afterwards, that he never regretted this impressive incident. Indeed it was in perfect accordance at this time with his wishes; though he had not enough confidence in himself to apply for admission, or to present himself along with others, when invited in the usual way to unite with the people of God. This occurred in September, 1793, in the sixteenth year of his age. He continued a faithful member of the Church, giving evidence to all that he was a Christian. He was also, by common consent, designated for a preacher; though his own pretensions were of the most retiring and unobtrusive character.

In the fall of 1795, he justly concluded that he stood in need of better clothing. His apparel consisted of the most common kind, the whole being made of home fabric. The circumstances of his father did not enable him to purchase better. The elder brothers had received their portion of the paternal inheritance, which was for the most part improved land; this enabled them to procure an ample supply of good articles for dress. But Robert R. having all along endeavored to do his utmost for the support of his father and mother, and the younger members of the family, was clothed in the most economical manner, and was even unwilling to press his father for that kind of clothing which was requisite for a person of his age. Accordingly, with the full consent of his father, he and Stephen Riley, by the instruction of Mr. Cornelius Riley, father of Stephen, went to Laurel Hill, a part of the Alleghany Mountains, in order to make tar, for the purpose of selling it, so that with the proceeds they might purchase clothing; as tar was then the most salable product which they could avail themselves

of. They took their provisions with them, made their camp in the woods, cooked their own victuals, and lived by these means with very little expense. Having sold the tar, they divided the proceeds. With his share, Robert purchased as good clothing as the country afforded, or rather as his limited means could reach. For breeches, the customary wear of the times, he bought yellow cassimer. The coat was of green cloth. This was the first bought suit with which he was favored. His principal object was, to have better clothes to go to meeting with. His brother Thomas, it seems, had been ashamed of his homely apparel; and it is probable he made some pointed remarks in reference to the matter, which stirred up not a little the latent ambition of Robert.

At this time he felt the need of more instruction at school. He enjoyed religious information and privileges, and made much progress in spiritual things; but his portion of learning was small. While very young, as we have seen, he learned to read the Scriptures. After his removal to Ligonier, this was nearly lost; but soon recovered again by the attention of his pious mother. Afterwards he improved himself much in reading religious books. But he greatly felt the need of some further instructions in arithmetic and writing. A part of the winter of 1795-96, was spent in going to school; the whole time, however, not amounting to three months. This was nearly all the schooling he received from the time he left Maryland, and it was the last with which he was favored. Mr. Carney, an Irish school-master, taught near his father's at this time; but not being a man of very good-character, he did not wish to go to him. Mr. M'Abée, a very honorable man, and competent teacher for the times, an Irishman also, as were nearly all the teachers of that day in Pennsylvania and Virginia, taught a school about three and a half miles from his father's, at Mr. Matthew Fisher's, which he attended. He

had to do the thrashing at his father's, an indispensable part of the work on a farm; and this he performed mostly on Saturdays, going home every Friday evening, and returning on Monday morning. He had likewise to work for his boarding, during his leisure hours, with Mr. M'Cracken, who, though a kind and obliging man, could not afford to board any one without pay. Robert R. scutched flax for him both morning and evening during his stay there. He worked at this early and late, and could scutch more flax than Mr. M'Cracken's two daughters, both of whom were older than he. It was not strange then to see women engaged in this kind of work. Indeed it was common, and elicited no remark.

At school, he made, for the time, the best proficiency possible in writing and arithmetic. Indeed, reading, writing and arithmetic, constituted the course of common school instruction in those times. Some added book-keeping; but this was a rare acquisition for a teacher; and the learners in this branch were very few. Grammar and geography were then unknown in common schools.

The teachers, too, in Pennsylvania, Virginia, &c., were mostly Irish, and nearly all Protestants. In their native country, before emigrating, their aim was generally to acquire sufficient knowledge in the branches spoken of to enable them to teach in the United States; with the intention of abandoning their profession when prospects might entice them to more lucrative pursuits. In reading, writing and arithmetic, they were adepts; especially in the branch last mentioned. They often prided themselves in working *hard questions* in it. In short, they were the Yankee teachers of the times.

The peculiar character of Robert R. Roberts had an opportunity to develop itself at Mr. M'Abbe's school. Mr. M'Abbe had imported from his native country a usage current there from time immemorial, and which obtained the

authority of an inviolable constitutional law. The custom was this: When a boy became very refractory, and was irreclaimable by such corrections as the free use of the rule in slapping his bare hand with might and main; or when the rod or cat with nine tails, in their usual inflictions, were insufficient to restore the disobedient to good order, there was another remedy remaining, which was the dernier resort. This was the horsing, and was as follows: The disobedient boy was mounted on the back of another, or if more than one was guilty, they interchanged the offices of horse and rider. The cat with nine tails was then plied freely in the open school. But before this act of extremity was commenced, a proclamation was made in the presence of all the scholars, that should any boy of thorough good character, and due influence, go security for the future good behavior of the refractory one, he would be pardoned for that time, and his surety must endure the flogging should the culprit ever commit such an offense again. A very bad boy had, by his ill conduct, incurred this penalty in Mr. M'Abbe's school. All things were in preparation for the grand act. The whole school stood in silent suspense. The righteous choler of the master arose to the proper height. The proclamation was made to ascertain if a surety could be had, should the boy promise reformation. The promise he made in penitence; but none seemed to come to his assistance. When execution was about to take place, and the sharp scourge was to be tested, Robert R. Roberts stepped forward, offering his mediation in behalf of his disobedient school-fellow. The proffer was accepted, the boy was thoroughly reclaimed for the future, and his friend, Roberts, received the homage of all. His dignified and condescending appearance even then commanded the respect of all his fellow youth. This act seemed to be the omen and first exercise of that mild and influential deportment which secured so much respect on all occasions from every

class of men in after life. This deportment was manifest when he presided in conference, when he preached in the pulpit, when he traveled in the public conveyances, and in all the relations of his social intercourse.

For his old teacher he retained the most respectful regard. Of this we had a vivid example in the summer of 1835. At that time our residence was in Pittsburg. He purposed to visit Ligonier in order to see his old friends. We also desired to spend a couple of weeks in the mountains, as a relief from the editor's office. We went in company, up the Pennsylvania canal, to the lower end of the Valley. At a village on the canal, the Bishop met his former teacher, M'Abee. It was then thirty-five years from the time that he had been his pupil. At first, they scarcely knew each other; but presently the teacher and pupil were recognized with the most earnest greetings. A long conversation ensued, calling up the incidents of the winter school; and the case of the refractory boy was introduced with all its details. The horses on which we were to ride waited fully two hours, saddled and hitched at the door, before the interview was at an end.

CHAPTER II.

SETTLEMENT OF SHENANGO.

IN the spring of 1796, Robert R. Roberts, being then nearly eighteen years of age, set out for Shenango, now Mercer county, Pennsylvania, in company with four others: his brother, Thomas Roberts, John Caughey, James Hubanks, and Wm. M'Lean. The section of country, embracing northwestern Pennsylvania, bounded by Lake Erie, the state of Ohio, the Ohio and Alleghany Rivers, French Creek and Conewango Creek, was then an almost uninhab-

ited region. This was particularly true in regard to Mercer county. In order to encourage the settlement of it, the Legislature of Pennsylvania had passed an act granting four hundred acres, and allowance, to any who would make actual settlement for five years, clear and fit for cultivation twenty-five acres, and build a house or cabin; and pay, at a certain time, twenty dollars for each hundred acres to the state. Their first object was to explore the country, and then, if they liked it, to become actual settlers, in order to secure to themselves a home and independence.

They traveled on foot, and carried their provisions on their backs in knapsacks. They crossed the Alleghany River at a place near where Freeport now stands, and this brought them within the bounds of the territory embracing the state grants. They went up the waters of Buffalo Creek, and spent a week in examining the lands within eight or ten miles of the Alleghany River. The country thus far possessed no qualities which attracted their attention so as to induce them to make locations.

During their stay there, which was in March, a light snow fell, which suggested to them the idea of hunting. They all had guns except Robert R. Roberts, and they all went to hunt except him. Being the youngest, as well as having no gun, it was thought best to leave him to take care of the camp. Even among hunters, poverty has its disadvantages and its privations. In the camp he could hear the report of the guns in different directions. About noon the snow disappeared, and all shortly returned without securing any game, not even a squirrel or a turkey, much less a deer or bear. They were all unpracticed hunters. Most of them, probably, were sufficiently good marksmen; but this is not one half of the hunter's art. To hit fairly the object aimed at is indispensable to a good hunter. In addition, he must possess all those stealthy, watchful and most deliberate qualities which will enable him to approach

the prey unobserved, and to proceed with the coolest deliberation, so as to be uninfluenced by the "deer fever," which throws such a tremor into the hands and eye of a hunter, as to disqualify him for his profession. There are many nameless and unnamable items which go to make up the true hunter, that our unskillful pen cannot describe. We therefore stop with these few meagre remarks, as descriptive of the true hunter, for it certainly would provoke the wrath of a genuine son of the woods, were he given to understand that a mere agriculturist, or a book maker, or an editor, or a literary man, would presume to say exactly what are the qualities requisite for a finished education in the art. Let such as want information on this point, converse a whole week with one of them on topics of the chase alone, and he will then begin to ascertain what constitutes the true hunter.

Young Robert disliked staying in camp, though he knew at that time, but little about handling a gun with suitable skill; and less yet about the mysteries of hunting. In the afternoon, however, he proposed to go on a hunting excursion by himself. His brother was opposed to this, as he was aware that he knew but little about the woods. But as Mr. Hubanks, his class-mate, who was a little older than he, proposed to go with him, it was agreed by his brother that he might try what he could do at hunting. Accordingly they proceeded to the chase. Robert R. furnished himself with his brother's gun. They took a northerly direction, and went on conversing for a while. They then parted, but agreed to keep as near together as circumstances would allow. After parting, and traveling a few hundred yards, they lost sight of each other. Robert R. thought he could find his own way, and did not trouble himself about his companion, believing that he could do the same. Traveling on the dividing ridge between two small water-courses, he saw at some distance two deer, and raised his

gun to fire. But just as he raised it, his eyes watered, and his hand trembled. He then went to a sapling to take rest, and, while preparing, the deer disappeared. He proceeded on, still pursuing the same direction. Looking down a little hollow, he saw three bears, an old one and two young ones. He sat down by a white-oak tree and prepared to shoot. They came up slowly to within about four rods of him, where a spring issued from the hollow place. The old one raised herself up, and began to snuff as if she scented him. He immediately fired at her breast. She fell, rolled on the ground, gnashed her teeth, and got up and fell again several times. One of the cubs ran away: the other squatted down. Robert R. sat down alarmed, with his gun unloaded, not knowing what to do; as he had never before been in such close quarters with wild beasts, nor even engaged in hunting. Before he got loaded again, after the delay occasioned by his surprise, the old bear recovered: she then began to walk slowly, and afterward to run; at length she got clearly away, the cubs following her. At this, he proceeded to the camp, and informed his companions what he had done. They all set out in quest of the bears, but were unable to catch them. This was his first introduction to hunting.

The pursuits of the chase and the prospects of the new country, were not very agreeable to all the young men, and some of them concluded to proceed no further. Thomas Roberts and Wm. M'Lean returned; but Robert R. Roberts, John Caughey and James Hubanks, proposed determinately to see the new country, and explore it fully. Robert R. seemed to have been particularly fixed in his design of completing his excursion; for though his elder brother Thomas did his utmost to persuade him to return, it was all in vain. He even left him no more money than barely enough to pay his expenses home, thinking by this means to compel him to return. Robert R. had no redress, as

Thomas was much older, and Robert had never possessed much money, though he had been the principal support of his father's family for several years previously. Having now set out to secure independence for himself during life, he could not be persuaded to abandon his purpose.

On the morning after the return of Thomas Roberts and Wm. M'Lean, the other three pursued their journey, having young Robert R. as their master spirit, though he was almost without money, and without even a gun—a requisite in a new country that cannot well be dispensed with. They traveled two days in a northeasterly direction without seeing any person. They had flour in their knapsacks. Their bread and ready provisions were exhausted: they were therefore compelled to commence the work of cooking. For the first time, they stopped to make up bread; for though Robert R., while engaged in sugar making, and in the manufacture of tar, had lived in camp and kept bachelor's hall, he never before had been compelled to make bread, as the supplies of this article in such circumstances were always received from home, or procured from neighbors. But now he must become baker, both for himself and his associates. In looking around for the requisite apparatus, he selected the hollow part of a fallen tree for his kneading trough, and scooped it out with his tomahawk. When the dough was made, it was flattened in thin slices, and rolled around sticks, so that the heat could penetrate the slices thoroughly. One end of the stick, and that end sharpened, was without any dough. The sharpened end was then thrust perpendicularly into the ground before the fire, and gradually turned round in its place, until the bread was thoroughly done. In this way they prepared their bread, which was palatable to them, and would be to any in their circumstances.

On the third day they struck the old Venango Path, which led from Pittsburg to a point at the mouth of French

Creek. They proceeded on till they came to the garrison at French Creek, the location of what is now Franklin. There Robert R. saw Indians for the first time. They were trading furs and other articles, and were drinking.

Here Robert R. and his companions spent the Sabbath, though there was not much sign of the Sabbath. An incident occurred at this place which shows the inconsistency of professors of religion. An Indian shot a large turkey, and took it to the landlady to sell. She bought it, and after paying for it, reproved the Indian for killing it on the Sabbath day. He asked, "If no luck to shoot on Sunday?" She remarked that she did not know as to luck, but it was a sin to break the Sabbath by shooting. The Indian retorted, "Ah! if luck, Indian no care for sin."

Wayne had treated at Greenville with the Indians, in 1795, and of course there was peace. The filthy habits and forbidding appearance, however, of the Indians, made no very favorable impression at that time on our young adventurers.

As they were in search of land, they made but little stay at the garrison. The land through which they had passed was rough and stony, and did not promise much to the cultivator: they therefore purposed exploring more of the new country, in order to find better locations than any they had yet seen. They went up French Creek to what was then called Cassewago, where Meadville now stands, and where there were then a few buildings. The flats of French Creek, which were natural meadows, were beautiful, and pleased them greatly; but they had been generally taken up by previous settlers. After spending a few days at Cassewago, they went down French Creek again as far as the mouth of Coneaut Creek, which emptied itself into French Creek, about eight miles below Meadville, on the west side. From the mouth of Coneaut, they proceeded westwardly to the heads of Sandy Creek, following

an old Indian path, called the Kuskuskia Path, and leading from Cassewago to Kuskuskia, a place on the Beaver River. When they had passed over Sandy Creek, they stopped for the night. They peeled some bark from chesnut trees, and made a camp. The location of this camp was about four miles northwest of Georgetown, and about two miles and a half from where Robert R. a short time after made his location.

Next morning they had an early breakfast, and concealed their knapsacks in different directions from the camp, in order to secure them from the depredations of straggling Indians that were still lingering around, or from lawless white persons who might perchance be passing by. They then proceeded to explore the country around, intending to return to the camp that night. They traveled on till they struck some of the head waters of the Little Shenango. There they saw bodies of land that pleased them much. Still they pursued their course, desiring to see more of the country, till it was too late to return to their camp on Sandy Creek. They therefore encamped near the Little Shenango, about three quarters of a mile north of the present residence of John Leech, sen. It is now a beautiful sugar grove, with luxuriant meadow among the sparse trees, and is watered with a limpid brook, and an excellent never failing spring.

They had left all their provisions behind them at the other camp, and were without any thing to eat, except a squirrel that one of the company had shot. As Mr. Roberts was the youngest, it fell to his lot to cook it. He suspended it before the fire, by a string fastened to a stake, so adjusted that the squirrel turned round before the fire. His associates laid themselves down, and were quickly asleep. He thought that he too needed sleep, and lay down to rest, still intending however to watch the squirrel. In a short time he was soundly asleep, as well as the others, and

when he awoke, it was all burned to a cinder. So they were all obliged to pass the night supperless.

About twenty years ago, a camp meeting was held within a few rods of the spring and grove where the encampment just spoken of was located, at which Bishop Roberts attended. It was the privilege of the writer also to be present. In delivering an exhortation after one of the brethren had preached, the Bishop took occasion to refer to their first encampment in the immediate vicinity. After an appropriate introduction, he turned half round on the stand, pointed to the spot, *just down there at the run beside Cornelius Riley's*, mentioned by name his associates, and improved the occasion in a manner that was truly thrilling; especially as there were then in the congregation many of the first settlers, John Caughey amongst the rest, sitting in the altar immediately before the Bishop. We need not say that Mr. Caughey enjoyed the narrative in which he necessarily had borne so conspicuous a part; and that all present were greatly instructed with the sublime moral lessons which the good Bishop taught them.

The morning after the supperless night, our young adventurers concluded to go down the Little Shenango a short distance, and then steer their course for the camp. John Caughey, a newly emigrated Irishman, afterward the Bishop's brother-in-law, being the oldest, was selected as the guide. But although he was a very good scholar among persons of common attainments, he was a very unskillful guide in traveling through the pathless woods. Consequently all very soon got lost, as the day was cloudy. After wandering through the woods for sometime, as Mr. Roberts thought, in different directions, they stopped and held a council as to the course that would lead them to their camp on Sandy Creek. They all differed in opinion respecting the direction in which the camp lay. Yet as they had chosen Mr. Caughey for their leader they yielded

to his opinion and followed his orders. But every step they took, R. R. Roberts thought was in the wrong direction, and the feelings produced were very unpleasant, as he knew that in some directions there were no inhabitants, and of course starvation would be the consequence, were they to go in those directions. The result proved that Mr. Roberts was correct in his opinion, that they were actually going in a wrong direction. Accordingly, he told Mr. Caughey that he could follow him no longer. As Mr. Caughey was of a very mild disposition, he yielded; and in the best good temper observed, "It is of no use to separate; if you will not follow me, I will follow you." The other also yielded; so both Hubanks and Caughey followed Roberts. Providentially he was in the right course, and in a few hours they reached the old trail they had left the day before, and by sun-down arrived at their camp on Sandy Creek, and found their provisions undisturbed. Their supper came in good place, as they had eaten nothing since the previous morning, except a few mountain tea-berries. This circumstance gave Mr. Roberts such an ascendancy over them as a woodsman, that ever after they followed his opinion in all such matters. Indeed his peculiar genius of mild, yet correct and firm government, which showed itself so conspicuously in after life, seemed to discover itself even at this early period. For he that is well qualified by nature to lead in one important matter, will be the best qualified to govern in all; other things being equal. And this is according to what the apostle says in giving instructions concerning the qualifications of ministers: "For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?" 1 Tim. iii, 5.

After supper they rested for the night, and next morning set out for the country they had explored the day before, taking along with them their provisions. They proceeded to the Little Shenango, and found several camps which

some Indians had just deserted, they having gone down the Big Shenango in canoes. After exploring the country a few days, they concluded to make improvements in order to hold possession, and accordingly commenced to build log cabins, girdling a few trees around them.

They fell in company with two other young men who were also looking for land, and they all, now five in number, concluded to keep together, in order that they might be the more able to build. The timber was good, the water excellent, and the soil appeared to be rich, so that they were much pleased; though afterward it did not fully answer their expectations. Each of the five now selected two tracts of land for himself, on which he intended to make improvements; and they were guided in their division lines by some that had been run by a company a year or two before. They generally slept in their camp, and regularly went out in the morning to their day's work. They cut logs, built a cabin, covering it with chesnut bark, and deadened a few trees; and this constituted their chief employment.

Their provisions very soon ran out; and Mr. Roberts had no money to buy more, as he had spent the small sum which his brother Thomas gave him on their parting. In this situation, he knew not what to do. He had no money to carry him home, or to induce him to stay, and he could get no employ to enable him to earn any. At this critical juncture, Mr. Caughey kindly came to his assistance. As he had money, he offered to lend some to his destitute associate until he could find a way to repay him. So they agreed to continue their improvements. They proceeded to Cassewago, and got a supply of provisions, which they carried on their backs upward, as the path then was, of twenty miles. The price too was high, as they had to be brought from Pittsburg up the Alleghany to the mouth of French Creek, and then up this creek to Meadville.

Amongst the whole five, there was but one coffee-pot, two other pots, and two tin kettles. Each, however, had a tin cup, a spoon and a butcher knife, a tomahawk and an axe. Sometimes they used chocolate, which they boiled in a tin kettle, thickening it with flour instead of milk.

On their return from Cassewago, they finished their cabins, and determined to separate from the two young men with whom they had recently associated in mutually aiding each other in the erection of cabins. The reason of the separation was, that on acquaintance with them they were found to be persons of such morals as rendered them both unpleasant and unprofitable companions, from whose society they could receive no benefit, and from whom they might receive much harm.

Accordingly, Mr. Roberts, John Caughey, and James Hubanks, his class-mate, lived together, and commenced clearing in different places some land, in order to plant corn and potatoes. They cleared a few acres, and brought their potatoes and corn on their backs from Cassewago, a distance, as already stated, of upward of twenty miles. They paid at the rate of three dollars per bushel for the potatoes. These were the first potatoes ever planted in the country. The corn was two dollars a bushel, or nearly so; as corn-meal brought that price at Cassewago. They also planted cucumbers. In thus erecting their cabins, clearing land, and carrying provisions on their backs so great a distance, it will readily be seen their labors and hardships were neither few nor small.

The game was plentiful; but as they were then unskillful hunters, they killed none for sometime. Nevertheless the necessities of their condition urged them to make vigorous endeavors to learn the art so important to them. One morning about day-light, while in bed, they heard the notes of an old turkey not far distant. Mr. Roberts told Mr. Hubanks, if he would let him have his gun he would try to kill

it. Hubanks unhesitatingly agreed to the proposal. He then took the gun, and set out in quest of the turkey. When near the place, it flew down from the tree on which it was roosting, and on seeing him it, with several others, ran away at full speed. Following the course they took, he started two deer which ran in the same direction. In a short time, he saw one of the turkeys coming back, running toward him. It came within forty or fifty yards, and then stopped behind a log, its head only being visible. When about to shoot at the turkey, he observed the deer also returning, but they stopped not quite so near as the turkey. He shot at one of them, and it fell. He ran up to it, and seized it by the leg, lest it might get away. Just at that moment he heard a voice inquire, "Have you hit it?" At this he was surprised, thinking he might be among Indians; but looking about him, he saw Caughey, who had gone around in another direction, and fortunately scared the game back again. They now had plenty of fresh meat for a season; and Hubanks, dressing the skin, made it into moccasons, which, being a cover to their feet, was no unwelcome aid to the young adventurers. In brief, they considered, as well they might, the supply altogether providential.

Their crop turned out to be a very poor one. The new country swarmed with ground squirrels, which devoured the greater part of the corn before, or just after it germinated. The potatoe crop, however, did well, and was their principal resource.

As they were in the spirit of exploring the country, they made occasional sallies around in order to see as much of it as they could. In their travels to and from Cassewago, they heard that there was a small lake at the head of Concaut Creek, and were desirous to see it. Accordingly they started one day, and traveled in a northern direction until they got into the swamp at the outlet of the lake, and of

course were obliged to return without accomplishing the object of their journey.

During that spring and summer, his mind was often pained, sometimes even settling down in depression. He often sat down upon the logs and wept, and found no relief but in prayer. The causes of his depression were four.

1. He was from home the first time for any space longer than a week.

2. The circumstances of his absence from home were unpleasant. He had declined returning with his brother, which determination he feared might be disapproved by his father, for whom he always had the highest regard.

3. He was every day becoming more deeply involved in debt; and he never before had owed any thing.

4. But the principal cause of his distress was the absence of all religious meetings. His class-mate, Hubanks, became, in some measure, careless, and lost his relish for religious conversation; and such was his own backwardness, that he had not as yet learned any thing of the religious views of Caughey: among the three they had but one Bible; and the young men with whom they were associated for a while, were very irreligious.

Under these circumstances, though he remained steadfast in his religious integrity, he was, nevertheless, often depressed; and many were the evenings that he wept before God until he received comfort to his heart. Shortly, however, before he left the place to go to Ligonier, returning on one occasion from secret devotions, he heard a voice, and on loitering a little, ascertained that Caughey was at prayer. This encouraged him much, as he had not previously known him to be religious. After this circumstance he was able to converse with him about spiritual matters with great satisfaction.

Sometime in June, as their corn had been destroyed, and all the improvements intended were accomplished, Robert

R. Roberts and James Hubanks concluded to return home and assist in harvesting. Mr. Caughey, however, remained. Roberts was especially inclined to this course, as there was no way of sending a letter to his friends, and they did not know precisely where he was.

In their journey, they proceeded to the mouth of French Creek. When they arrived there, Mr. Roberts, knowing that he was in debt, and fearing to return home in such a condition, hired himself to the captain of a keel-boat bound to Meadville, in order to get money to meet his obligations. Hubanks hired himself to the same employer. Most of the hands were unacquainted with the business, and the captain was intemperate. The new hands made three unsuccessful attempts to ascend the ripple near the mouth of French Creek, but were driven back by the force of the current. The captain, being in liquor, became exasperated, and said he could find two men that would push the boat up themselves, and there were now six of them making the effort. Unwilling to take such abuse, Mr. Roberts, when near the shore, jumped off the boat, and told the captain he might find such hands as soon as he saw fit: as for him he would endure no such treatment. Nearly all the others did the same thing, and left the captain to try the alternative of his two choice men. Finding that he was about to lose his hands, he changed his tone to kindness, and endeavored to persuade them to remain. At his earnest entreaty, they all returned. On making another effort, they got the boat over the ripple, and pushed her on to the mouth of Sugar Creek. By this time the captain had become so intoxicated, that he could go no further. They, therefore, put ashore; and as he had some land located near the place, he directed them to girdle some trees, or do any thing else they pleased. They staid there during the night. As the captain by next morning had become sober, they started on their voyage. On the third day, about noon, they reached Casse-

wago or Meadville, and unloaded the boat, the freight being flour, bacon, whisky, &c. As the boat was to return immediately to Pittsburg, Roberts and Hubanks went in her to that place, which was then very small, and had a poor appearance. The old garrison was to be seen, and a new one had been commenced.

From Pittsburg they traveled home on foot in a day and a half, the distance being fifty miles. Young Roberts' clothes had become old, and owing to his recent peculiar circumstances, were not well washed. His hair was long, and he was thin in appearance, although in good health. When his father and friends saw him, they were greatly rejoiced; for they had not heard a word about him from the time his brother, Thomas, had returned, which must have been nearly five months. They feared he had been killed by the Indians, or devoured by wild beasts. They had frequently reflected on his brother for not using greater exertions to induce him to return. But their anxieties were all relieved when they saw he was safe and well. His father did not reflect much upon him, but was unwilling he should go back; and as he was a minor it was his duty to submit. Harvest came on, and this occupied him for the present. He spent the time happily in the society of his friends and in Christian communion.

Whatever may have been the reasons which induced him to make some juvenile attempts at preaching, as in the case already mentioned, it was in the fall of 1796, that he seriously felt impressed to preach the Gospel. But he could not bring his mind to make a public effort, as he had high views of the ministerial character, and thought his own inability so great that he never could succeed. He prayed, however, in public whenever called upon, but here the exercise of his talents stopped.

His mind frequently dwelt upon the scenes of the preceding spring and summer, and thought the country which he

had left preferable to that in which he lived, and he had a desire to return.

In the spring of 1797, the father of Bishop Roberts consented that he should again go to Shenango in company with his elder brother, Thomas. They started, his younger brother, Lewis, also going with them. Robert R. likewise took along with him Stephen Riley, purposing to settle him on one of the tracts he had selected. Other persons of enterprise went also, in order to select and improve land for themselves. The whole company consisted of nine persons, namely: Robert R. Roberts, Thomas Roberts, Lewis Roberts, Stephen Riley and Wm. Lindsay, from Ligonier; James Stevenson, sen., James Stevenson, jr., Rev. Jacob Gurwell and John Caughey, from Loyalhanna. Each had a horse laden with provisions and some cooking utensils, together with such bed clothing as enabled them to encamp in the woods without suffering much. Each also traveled on foot, leading or driving his horse, and carrying his axe and knapsack of provisions beside. By this time, a path had been made through the region where Butler and Mercer now stand, which was far preferable to the circuitous route through Venango and Cassewago. Very little of this country, however, was then settled, except toward Pittsburg, so as to furnish houses to lodge in at night. Even the best course for a path had not yet been selected, nor the most suitable crossing-places of the streams: neither had any of the streams bridges across them at that time, and when they could not be forded, they had to be crossed by swimming. After the Alleghany River, Breakneck, Big Kinnicones, Muddy Creek, Slippery Rock, Wolf Creek, Neshanick and Little Shenango, had all to be crossed, some by swimming, and others by deep fording. Little Shenango, about two miles south of where Georgetown now stands, was crossed by the aid of trees that were felled on each side, over which the packs were carried, while the horses had

to swim. During much of the journey, they encamped in the woods at night.

Thomas Roberts was well pleased with the country, and selected a tract of land on which to make improvement. He and Lewis then returned with their horses, leaving Stephen Riley and Robert R. Roberts to open some land and put in a crop. They left the provisions they had brought, and promised to return at a certain time, bringing with them a fresh supply. Mr. Gurwell and Mr. Stevens, sen., also returned with them. On starting Thomas Roberts left with his brother four dollars in money for necessary expenses.

About the last of March, 1797, Robert R. Roberts, Stephen Riley and Wm. Lindsay started on Sabbath morning, to an Indian camp on Sandy Creek, to buy sugar, carrying their guns with them. They set out on Sunday in order that they might have the company of one of the Indians who was on a visit to their camp, as they feared they could not find the way themselves. They carried their guns, as this was the custom with all in the new country wherever they went, both to protect themselves and to preserve their guns from being stolen. They purchased four dollars' worth of sugar, the entire sum that Thomas Roberts had left. They fired at a flock of deer on their way to the camp, but without success. On their return in the afternoon, it rained hard, and they got lost in a pine swamp. They wandered round and round, but with all their endeavors could not get out of it. They kindled a fire, but in consequence of the wetness of the fuel, it did not burn well. Shortly after dark, they heard the scream of a panther within a very short distance of the spot where they were. They occasionally fired their guns, and encouraged their dog to pursue it, but to little purpose, the dog well knowing the panther's character. In this way they spent the whole night, keeping constant watch, being

at the same time wet, weary, hungry and cold. In consequence of their dread of the panther, and the care of watching, the sugar was exposed to the rain, and by morning was all melted, and consequently lost. Robert R. Roberts thought that this was a judgment on them for breaking the Sabbath, by traveling, purchasing sugar, and shooting. He never carried his gun on this holy day afterward.

On this transaction we have a good moral lesson. Their reason for Sabbath breaking was insufficient. The sugar was not necessary; and if it had been, they could have found the way readily on a week-day.

The sin was aggravated. They sinned in company, and in association with uninstructed heathens. They traveled, fired their guns, and trafficked on the day required to be observed as a "day of rest."

Their present correction was of a most marked character. They lost their way, had their sugar wasted, and suffered from cold, hunger, rain, and want of sleep. They lost as much of week-day time as would have been sufficient to accomplish their object without violating the Sabbath.

Substantially the same results attend all Sabbath breaking. It is done without just reason or strict necessity; it is an aggravated and foolish sin; it is unprofitable. And such is Sabbath breaking ordinarily, whether in carrying Sabbath mails, in taking Sabbath journeys, or in doing any kind of unnecessary Sabbath work.

After Robert R. Roberts and Stephen Riley had commenced making improvements, they worked hard. They cleared a field for corn. But not being very economical in the use of their provisions, and Thomas Roberts not coming for sometime after the expected period, the provisions ran out, and they were reduced to great extremity. They were both fond of the gun, and each had an excellent rifle. Game too was plentiful, but they could kill none, as they

were not good hunters. Mr. Riley staid with Robert R. Roberts a short time after the expected return of Thomas, and then left him, and hired with another man. Robert R. was not willing to do that; and as he could kill nothing but squirrels, he lived about three weeks on squirrels and salt, without partaking of any thing else. He of course became poor and emaciated by this way of living; and so thoroughly tired was he of the kind of food just mentioned, that ever after he refused to eat squirrels, except when compelled by necessity, or induced to it by courtesy.

As he heard nothing from his brother, he determined to go to French Creek and pawn his rifle for some provisions. With this intention, he set out one morning, and traveled four or five miles, when he met his brothers, Thomas and Lewis, his father, and his sister, Elizabeth. They had four horses laden with provisions, and drove four cows. When his sister saw him, she sprang from her horse, burst into tears, embraccd him most affectionately, and was so overcome that she could not speak. Robert felt, as he afterward expressed himself, like Jacob when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent for him. He returned with his friends to the cabin and unloaded the provisions; while all felt gratified with the circumstances with which they were surrounded.

As pea-vines were then abundant, the horses and cows fed on them, in the woods immediately around the cabin. His sister kept house. With the four cows, she made sufficient butter to supply their own family and the greater portion of the neighbors. Their house was the centre of the whole neighborhood. The country became now comparatively filled with persons looking for land, and most of them resorted to the house of Robert R. Roberts to get information concerning the region around, so that they might make the best selections of soil and location. It was soon known that the house was well stored with provisions, and

the number of visitors continued to increase. Elizabeth Roberts, too, was noted for her kindness and liberality. She would carry with her own hands provisions to the hungry within her reach. And when the neighbors called at their cabin or passed by, she would inquire if they wished to eat, and would always give them freely of the best she could furnish. And, moreover, when she saw persons passing near the house, whom she suspected of being hungry, she would go to the fence, hail them as they passed, carrying them victuals to relieve their hunger, if they could not stop, or inviting them in to partake of her supplies. But, her benevolence did not stop here. From Ligonier she took with her four coarse linen under bed-ticks; and as many of the new settlers were very much in need of clothing, she cut them all up to make clothes for those who needed them most. In short, she became the common benefactress of the hungry, the ill-clad, the houseless and the stranger; and whenever any were sick, her best services were rendered to them most freely and kindly. She was the first woman who went to that settlement. There was no other nearer than where Mercer now stands, a distance of nineteen miles, or Meadville, a distance of twenty-two miles.

R. R. Roberts raised some corn, potatoes, turnips and pumpkins; and determined to spend the next winter in that country, his sister agreeing to spend the winter with him. In the fall, his father, brother, and most of the people returned to the old settlements. He laid up a good stock of provisions—of salt a large supply. As chesnuts were very plentiful, he collected a large quantity of them. He had also found a bee-tree; it was a large pine. The quantity of honey obtained therefrom was eleven gallons, which he put away in a trough made for the purpose, setting it in his spring-house, and covering it with a lid made of a puncheon. Thus they had an abundance of honey during the winter.

He had, besides his own rifle, several others left in his care, with a plentiful supply of ammunition, and he determined to spend the winter in hunting. He kept a journal of the events of this winter; but it was either lost, or he subsequently destroyed it, as no information respecting it could be found among his relatives, except barely that it was kept. On the 9th of November, 1797, it began to snow, and continued for two days and nights; but as the ground was wet, much of the snow melted. What remained, however, was twelve or fifteen inches deep. He commenced hunting, and continued it every day except Sundays; for he had no work on hand except procuring wood and foddering his cattle. Upward of two weeks, he hunted diligently, but killed nothing, as he always overshot the deer. When he went home at night, he was generally much fatigued. His sister plead earnestly with him to desist, as he would probably lose his life by hunting, and she must also perish with him in so lonely a country, for no aid could be brought to her relief from her friends till the spring. But as he had an unconquerable desire to become a hunter, he persisted in his course.

One morning subsequently, after some snow had fallen which made it unpleasant traveling, he went toward the creek, and saw a large flock of turkeys. As it was with difficulty they could get through the snow, he, supposing he could catch them, took a circuit in order to get around and head them. After doing so, he saw a large hollow chesnut-tree, with a hole burned through it. He stepped into the tree, and put his gun through the hole, in order to fire at the turkeys as they came toward him. In a few minutes, a deer of the largest kind, came walking along, within three or four rods. He had heard hunters say, that if a person would bleat, under such circumstances, the deer would stop. He therefore made a noise in imitation of the bleating of a deer. Immediately it stopped, and raised its head, at which

he fired. He then stepped out, and saw the deer running back as fast as possible. At this he despaired of ever being a hunter: he thought he could not certainly have a better opportunity than the present; and he might as well give up hunting for ever. Having loaded up, he went on the track of the deer, and perceived some blood. Following on the track a little further, he found it dead. He was now so rejoiced that, instead of skinning the animal, he left it, and went to tell his sister of his success. He returned, however, immediately, skinned and dressed the deer, and carried it on his shoulders home, not a little flushed with what he had so successfully done.

Early next morning, he saw another deer, and pursued it. He fired; the deer returned on its track, and he followed till it fell. Thus he continued successfully to pursue the chase till February. He took proper care of the flesh, preserving the hams, and eating the parts that could not be well cured to advantage.

At one time, he observed tracks which he did not know, but on finding them traced to a tree, he cut it down, and with the assistance of his little dog, Yuno, killed three racoons that had resorted to it. These were the first he had ever taken. Their hams were preserved, and the other parts eaten forthwith as needed. The hams, when frosted and smoked, are improved in their flavor to a very high degree.

On examination, he found some of his best hams had large holes eaten in them, and he could not ascertain how it was done. One night he heard some of the clapboards rattle on his spring-house, in which the hams were kept. He took his dog with him, and going toward the spring-house, saw an animal run out at the top: the dog chased it and treed it. He made a very large fire at the root of the tree, and observed an animal above, which he brought down with his rifle dead at his feet. He did not know

precisely what kind of animal it was. On the following day, however, an Indian who happened to be passing that way informed him it was a wild cat.

CHAPTER III.

RELIGION PLANTED IN SHENANGO.

DURING the month of February, 1798, Robert R. Roberts continued his hunting, rising early every day. This occupation, however, was sometimes attended with considerable danger to his life; and that danger was owing, in some degree, to his want of due skill and practice in the chase. This remark will be fully confirmed by an occurrence which took place during this winter, as far as can be ascertained. It happened on Thompson's Run, about two miles from his cabin.

In one of his hunting excursions he had fired at an old deer, at the head of a flat gully or hollow, leading to Thompson's Run, or rather was one of its head rivulets, but was dry, except in very wet weather. The animal fell prostrate, as if dead. He proceeded toward the supposed dead prey, without observing the customary precaution of hunters, that of always re-loading on the discharge of the rifle, before approaching the animal fired at, though apparently wounded or dead. When he was about to seize the fallen deer, for the purpose of bleeding and dressing it, the infuriated and only wounded animal, sprang to its feet, and with its long, branchy, and many pronged horns, and sharply pointed hoofs, attacked ferociously our young hunter. His only mode of resistance was to seize on both the horns with his hands, while the animal employed its feet so well as to tear in tatters the hunter's clothes. It reared frequently, raising its assailant from the

ground, so that both were many times thrown down. In the meantime the fore feet of the deer were constantly employed in inflicting severe bruises, while the hunter could do no more than barely prevent the deadly use of the horns. The struggle commenced at the head of the hollow, and continued downward, until both reached a place where a large tree had fallen across, so as to leave room in the middle for a person to pass under, the height from the ground being three or four feet. His dog rendered some aid by seizing the deer frequently by the hind legs. Under this tree, both were precipitated. Here the deer was unable to rear itself erect as before; and the hunter, by the assistance of the dog, got the advantage so far as to place both his knees on the deer's shoulder, when, with one hand he held down its head, and with the other employed his butcher knife in dispatching the animal.

The danger of his position was certainly imminent, as all know who have experience or knowledge of such encounters. On another occasion, Mr. Roberts had wounded severely a deer of similar size: it was immediately attacked by two or three dogs, which prevented it from running. With one bound and desperate push of his horns, the animal brought a large dog to the ground, piercing it through in several places, so that it was instantly killed; and the deer was dispatched only by the frequent discharge of the rifle. Mr. Jolly, in the same neighborhood, a year or two afterward, fired at a deer and wounded it. On seizing the animal, the struggle continued for a distance of forty rods. Mr. Jolly, however, prevented its rising, though it carried him the distance just named, before he could kill it. In short, the escape of R. R. Roberts, on the occasion referred to, was not less remarkable than that of John Wesley on the burning of his father's house. And we may as justly ascribe providential interference to the one case as to the other.

It is not marvelous that his sister, Elizabeth, was much and frequently alarmed at the dangerous condition, both of her brother and herself. As he had several perilous encounters similar to those mentioned above, and as he often staid out at night, to an earlier or later hour, her apprehensions were far from being imaginary. Had he perished in an hunting excursion, how perilous her situation must have been, as there was no female nearer than nineteen or twenty-two miles, and scarcely any male persons, at that time of the year, within the same distance. Whenever her brother staid out late at night, it was her custom to get on the roof of the cabin, by climbing at the corner, and then halloo at the highest pitch of her voice, in order to give him the direction home in case he had lost his way. It was also his custom to fire his gun, when he heard her call, and thus give the signal that he was alive and was returning, at which her fears were relieved, and she would go into the house. When, however, he continued his stay, she would repeat her calls, with little interruption, until the signal agreed on was given.

One morning seeing some deer, he killed one of them, and hung up the flesh, covering it with the skin, in order to protect it from the ravens. He then got on the track of a black fox, but failing to find it he returned in the afternoon toward home, and as he returned shot another deer, and broke its thigh. His dog ran toward it, and made it stop; but before he could reach the animal it started again. He pursued it, until he got into a region of woods he had never been in before. He next crossed a pine swamp, and went toward the west just as the sun was going down. He found the deer on the ice, where it had fallen, the dog having caught it and pulled off its hair. The dog went toward him, and he fired again at the animal, killed it, and dragged it to the shore. While skinning it darkness came on, and the wolves began to howl in various directions. He hung

up the meat, covering it with the skin as usual, and started for home. He steered his course through the swamp up to the highlands by the aid of the full moon, which had just then risen.

His sister, in consequence of his late stay, was very much alarmed, and as usual uttered her signal, continuing to do so until she heard his customary response. When he arrived on the high ground, he heard a voice hallooing, and supposed it to be the voice of his sister, but wondered that it was so near. He fired his gun, loaded again and traveled on. This relieved his sister's mind, who on this occasion was unusually afflicted, for she had nearly given him up as lost. After he had arrived and had eaten his supper, he lay down on the floor, with his feet toward the fire, as was usual with hunters. It was now about midnight. The dog began to bark; and his sister looking out, saw, by the light of the moon, some persons approaching. She feared they were the Indians, and of course was greatly alarmed. On informing her brother, he jumped up, examined his gun, and requested her to stay in the cabin, while he stood at the door for defense. He placed himself in a ready position to fire, if necessary, at the same time carefully observing the approach. He soon perceived a man leading a horse with some one upon it. And to his great joy and surprise, found that it was John Caughey, who had married his sister, Esther, and was just returning from the old neighborhood. He had got lost, and was hallooing when Robert R. fired his gun, and this led him toward the house. As Elizabeth and Caughey both hallooed, it is probable that Robert heard both, or he may have heard Caughey only. The report of his gun, however, directed the one on his way, and relieved the fears of the other. Mr. Caughey informed him that his father, and his brothers, John and Lewis, were just behind. In about half an hour they arrived. They had all proceeded from Ligonier to

Shenango on horse-back, which was the only way they could travel at that time. They carried with them as many articles of provision as they conveniently could. They were several days in performing the trip, and much of the night of their arrival had passed away before they reached the clearing and the cabin where the brother and sister dwelt, it being as already stated, about midnight. The salutations between the friends were unaccompanied with formality, but they were sincere and warm. Robert R. slept none during the night for joy; and Elizabeth was in ecstasies, as well she might, after so many anxieties and comparative solitude. The relatives had expected to find the brother and sister, upon their arrival, almost, if not entirely, out of provisions. In the place of this, however, they found the cabin well stored with venison of the best quality. The arrival of his friends, it is scarcely necessary to say, finished his hunting for the winter.

Notwithstanding the active mode of Robert R. Roberts' life, his mind was still much impressed with the duty of becoming a minister; and this occupied his thoughts, whether wandering through the woods, or, in short, wherever he was.

The arrival of his friends was very unexpected, as he did not think it safe for them to come so far till the latter part of March. It was, however, highly gratifying to see them, more especially as his father intended to make that country his future home, having sold a part of his possessions in Westmoreland. This seemed to brighten R. R. Roberts' prospects very much, both of temporal and spiritual prosperity, as the family was large and mostly grown, and all would probably settle in the neighborhood, land being cheap and plentiful. Many of them were members of the Methodist Church, and it was expected a regular society would be formed and they would be visited by the preachers.

A few days were spent together; but as provisions were

scarce, Robert R. and John Roberts took the skins and furs which Robert R. had collected during the winter, and went back to the old settlement on horse-back, and there disposed of them to the best advantage.

As his father had now moved, and as supplies of provision were difficult to procure, Robert R. formed the plan of taking some by water down from Connelsville to Beaver, and up Beaver and the Big and Little Shenangos. He went to Connelsville, and purchased a perogue, or a very large canoe. On his way to Connelsville, he stopped at the house of the Rev. Jacob Gurwell, a local preacher, who resided near Chesnut Ridge, about ten miles east of Mount Pleasant, Westmoreland county. While there, Mr. Gurwell had a meeting at the house of James Stevenson, sen., brother-in-law to Mr. Caughey. Mr. Gurwell insisted that R. R. Roberts should say something to the people, by way of exhortation, at the conclusion of his sermon. Accordingly he made the attempt, and proceeded with great correctness and pathos to deliver a brief address for the edification of the hearers. Not long after commencing, an aged Christian, Mr. M'Lean, looked very intensely at the young exhorter, which so confused him that in a very short time he desisted, supposing the earnest gaze was an expression of disapproval of his intolerable blunders; whereas, the venerable Christian was struck at the able and unexpected performance of the incipient essayist. This was his first public effort by way of exhortation; and it furnished an example both of his ability and great diffidence, which diffidence seems to have been innate, as it remained with him more or less through life, even until he finished his course.

After purchasing the load of provisions and other articles, they proceeded on their voyage, the whole company consisting of R. R. Roberts, James Stevenson, sen. and Wm. Lindsay. They found but little difficulty in descending

the Youghaganey, Monongahela and Ohio Rivers; but had considerable in their ascent up the Beaver and two Shenangos, in consequence of the highness of the waters, the falls of Beaver, and the heading of the current. At the falls of Beaver they came near losing their load. The danger was at *Turkey Rock*. Here Lindsay alone was in the perogue, as steersman. The others were on shore using the cordelle, that is, having a rope fastened to the canoe, passing over their shoulders, at which they pulled with their utmost strength. The escape of Lindsay at this dangerous passage was within a hairbreadth of submersion, as he and Stevenson themselves afterward stated.

At the falls they fell in company with another perogue, bound for the same place. As the water was high, they of course progressed very slowly. Such was its height at the mouth of the Shenango, that they could not even reach the bottom with their poles. The low banks of the river being inundated, and the banks of the streams emptying into the river being closely lined with trees, bushes and fallen timber, they could but seldom use the cordelle. Under these circumstances, they concluded to leave their canoes, with one of their number in each, and proceed to the settlement, supposing that it was but a few miles distant, though they were actually not within thirty miles of it, the place of their stopping being at the mouth of the Meshannick Creek, where New Castle now stands.

They expected to reach the settlement on the same day, which was Saturday. Six of them were in company. They traveled all day, and were obliged to camp out at night without provisions. A snow storm came on before morning, and they found themselves in the wilderness, where every track and path was so obscured, that they could not ascertain their course with any certainty. In the evening they found a moccason track, which they supposed to have been made by an Indian. They followed it, and it

led them to some Indian camps on the banks of the Shenango. The leading Indian, Captain Petty, could talk English, and from him they learned they were only six or eight miles up the river from the place where they had left their canoes on Saturday morning. Thus they had traveled two days to but little purpose. They were all, of course, very hungry, having fasted two days and a night, and performed the hard labor of traveling most of the time in the snow. Captain Petty promised to provide some victuals for them. After the use of a camp had been given them, they waited with no small degree of impatience for the promised supplies; as what they had gone through was not well calculated to preserve, much less improve the temper. The time of waiting seemed very long to them, and Robert R. Roberts went to the captain and told him they were exceedingly hungry, to which the captain replied, "The women are cooking." Shortly afterward two squaws came along with a little brass kettle, holding about one and a half or two gallons, half full of venison, which had been cut up in pieces not too large to be taken into the mouth at once, and broiled in bears' oil. No salt was furnished; they however had some with them, which, of course, they used. Mr. Gurwell being the oldest, a little hommony was brought him, but the rest received none. Shortly a hunter came in with a deer, a quarter of which was sent to the strangers as their share. They cooked some and eat it, and reserved the remainder for the next meal. Having breakfasted on it the following morning, they bought from the Indians some sugar; and also hired Captain Petty, as he could speak English, to be their guide, for which he was to receive the sum of two dollars. One of the company, however, who had been absent, when the contract was made, coming in and learning the terms, objected, by saying that they had offered too much. The Indian, at this, became very angry, and said, "When I say, 'what you give me?' you say, 'what

you take?' then I say what I take—you say 'that too much.'” The objector remarked, that they had not much money. The Indian replied with great spirit, “That man lie—he got money enough.” The Indian, in short, became so much out of temper that he refused to go on any consideration whatever.

Some of the company then applied to an old man. R. R. Roberts thought he could not stand the journey; and as he could not speak English, he objected to employing him. Nevertheless, after some further conversation, the company agreed to accept his services. After starting, they found the old Indian could travel as fast as any of them. When they had gone some distance, the Indian grew apparently fearful of his pay, and began to make signs that he would like to have his money. On the other hand, they feared to pay him lest he should leave them. On that night they got to the edge of the settlement, about eight or ten miles from where R. R. Roberts' clearing was. They paid the Indian next morning, and he left them, well pleased with their remuneration.

When Robert R. Roberts reached home, he found his sister making sugar. She had already made a quantity, and was worn down with fatigue, as she had labored day and night at this slavish work. She had on hand much sugar water and syrup. During the day she collected the water from the troughs, and kept the kettles and pots boiling; and during the night, or a great part of it, she still attended to the filling up of the kettles and the good order of the fires. Her brother, on his arrival, took her place, and thus afforded her rest at the house. He, too, was both tired and sleepy, and in no very good condition to superintend such a business. He however commenced, with the purpose of doing efficient services for the night. After filling up the kettles, he lay down to rest, intending to wake up in due time. He awoke sometime about midnight, filled

the kettles, and after laying down, immediately fell asleep. The kettle of the strongest syrup boiled over, the noise of which awakened him. He sprang up in great alarm. The blaze appeared to be six or eight feet high. In the confusion of the moment, he seized a bucket, filled it with water, and threw it into the overflowing kettle. The sudden effect of the cold water was to split the kettle in two, the syrup, of course, being all spilled into the fire. This exploit finished his sugar making for the night.

After a delay of two or three days, R. R. Roberts and his younger brother, Lewis, went down the Shenango to where the canoes were, and brought them up to the neighborhood, within a mile and a half of his house. This was probably the first and last time that pirogues were taken up the Little Shenango by white men.

About the middle of April this year, (1798,) R. R. Roberts and his younger brother, Lewis, went back to Ligonier for the purpose of conveying to the new residence a part of his father's family; namely, his sisters, Sarah, Nancy and Sophia, and his maternal grand-father, Mr. Richford, who was then a very old man, probably about ninety-three years of age. It was with difficulty he could travel on horse-back, the only mode of traveling in this new country at that time. One of them had often to ride by his side, especially in crossing the streams, in order to protect him from falling from his horse; and, for the most part, to ride or walk near him, so as to keep his horse in the path, and prevent himself from receiving injury from the branches of the trees, or the limbs of fallen timber. They were ten days in traveling from Ligonier to Shenango, starting on the 25th of April, and arriving on the 4th of May. They traveled about ten miles each day. They crossed Wolf Creek by felling trees on each side, which met in the middle. Robert R. carried on his back the bags of flour and other provisions over this newly and singularly constructed bridge,

walking on the trunks of the fallen trees, or stepping cautiously from branch to branch, and thus the articles were saved from being wet. He next took his sisters across, one by one, leading them by the hand and passing on before them. Then the horses, all but two, were driven into the water, and compelled to swim across. The grand-father and the two remaining horses were still on the other side. The old man could not cross the logs by any aid with which he could be furnished. Beside, being in his dotage, he was sometimes peevish; and on this occasion became unusually stubborn, and refused to do any thing. The horses that had crossed were carried down the stream some distance, and they approached the other side, where the bank was high, and the water just below swimming depth. They then had to walk several rods along the bank in the water, up stream, before they could get out. After considerable complaining and resistance on the part of the grand-father, Robert R. got him on one of the remaining horses, and mounted the other himself, leading the old man's horse by the bridle. They slowly entered the stream, he, probably by a stealthy march, getting Mr. Richford in the water, and then proceeded to the deep place, in swimming over which, he held his grand-father on the saddle, leading the horse on which he rode, and guiding his own as well as he could, until the horses struck the bottom on the other side, just against the high bank. There the grand-father's faithful nurse and guardian, Sarah, kind and attentive as a mother, was ready to aid. With Robert on the horse, and Sarah on the bank, the venerated man was lifted off, and placed securely on the bank without injury, except a good wetting, and a terrible fright, he belaboring them heartily at the same time for their rough treatment. The beloved grand-father was then left in the care of Sarah, while Robert took the horses up stream to where he could leave the channel. After some changing of wet clothes for dry, and other little

adjustments, they re-loaded the packs, and continued the journey, glad that their charge was preserved from a watery grave, and that they had it in their power to contribute toward his safety and comfort.

During the whole journey they lay out every night. Nancy Roberts drove three cows and two pet pigs, carrying an axe on her shoulder, and walking all the way. Sarah walked also, and carried a spinning wheel on her shoulder, beside taking care of her grand-father much of the journey. Sophia sometimes rode behind the pack on one of the horses, and sometimes walked. The old man, though very feeble and somewhat peevish, received no injury by the journey.

Both the temporal and spiritual concerns of the new settlement now began to wear a new aspect. The family of the Roberts was a considerable accession to the population, or rather they formed the original stock, and became the nucleus of the whole. A large number of other families and individuals also crowded into the new country. Hence, all, or nearly all the land was immediately occupied, some by individuals who expected to be joined shortly by their families, residing elsewhere, and desigining to make this new location their future homes. In many cases, whole families moved at once, instantly commencing their improvements. In every four hundred acre tract, one or more cabins were erected, and clearings commenced, while settler greeted settler in every direction, hailing him, though formerly an utter stranger, as his neighbor and his brother, with whom he and his children were to partake in future time of the weal or woe of human life, and of the advantages or disadvantages of the new country. In many other cases, the ties that combine relatives and old neighbors, formed points of attraction and influence. Relative induced relative to share with them the advantages of their new and permanent home. Hence, long lines of family relations were attracted

to this new neighborhood. There were the Roberts, and Stevensons, and Walkers, and M'Leans, and Dumars, &c., to fill up large portions of the previously unoccupied territory. Then neighbors induced former neighbors to become their associates, for future time, on the prospects of independence and wealth, or at least the competency which they would undoubtedly possess in the new settlement. When one of the new settlers visited his former neighbors or friends, in the older settlements where he had formerly dwelt, the inquiry was made by all, *What do you think of the new country?* The visitant was eloquent in answering the question, stating that the land was good and cheap, the water pure, and the prospects all flattering, while his tongue glowed with ardor in his descriptions, and his very feelings were enlisted in urging his friends to partake with him of the golden prospects. By such means, means that always tend powerfully to replenish new settlements, the population of Shenango was very much increased.

But the religious prospects were still more favorable, especially to Methodists. Nearly all the Roberts were steady and well established members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, who formed an excellent basis for the organization of a new Church. A large number of others were also attached to the same Church, who, from their good character, were valuable members. The Rev. Jacob Gurwell, an Irishman, and a local preacher, of moderate talents, but of excellent Christian character and sterling worth, became a permanent inhabitant of the new colony. On his arrival in the settlement in the spring of this year, (1798,) he immediately commenced holding meetings. He was faithful and useful. He preached every Sabbath day to his neighbors, and was the *first* who *opened the kingdom of heaven*, in the new settlement, making good use of the *keys*, by planting a Church, and proclaiming the Gospel where Christ had never been preached before. He was therefore

the ministerial apostle of this country; as Robert R. Roberts was the pioneer of its improvement and population. Mr. Gurwell searched out and found all who had formerly been members of the Church, and exhorted them to remember their Christian obligations. It is probable that he met them in class for some time, before any formal organization took place.

Soon after the arrival of Mr. Gurwell, another local preacher, Mr. Thomas M'Clelland, an Irishman also, became a settler in the neighborhood. He had preached two years in Ireland, under the direction of Mr. Wesley. He possessed excellent gifts as a preacher, had great zeal, and was a man of unblemished Christian character and ardent piety. His labors were much blessed to the new settlement. Indeed he became, as a matter of course, the principal spiritual guide of the new settlers. He and Mr. Gurwell labored in great harmony together; and by their joint labors, the religious concerns of the neighborhood received a great impulse, while beginnings were then made whose influence continues to this day, and will doubtless remain in progress during all time.

The first society or class was formed in the settlement in the summer of 1798, probably by the local preachers, as is mostly the case; for to them it pertains, as pioneers of religion, to organize the first classes almost everywhere. When Robert R. Roberts left Ligonier, in 1796, he took no certificate of his membership with him, as there had been no Church formed as yet at Shenango, and it was then uncertain whether he would make the new country his home; he therefore preferred still holding his membership in Ligonier. When, however, in 1797, he determined to settle in this country, he applied for his certificate of Church membership. This he received from Rev. J. Smith, of the Redstone circuit, which then embraced Ligonier. When the class was formed, he was chosen as leader. He met

them; and though he sang and prayed, yet he did not speak to them in the customary way. Several of the class were members of his father's family, all of whom were older than himself, and, as he thought, more gifted; and therefore he was too timid to exhort and instruct them. Besides, he was naturally retiring, even to a fault. This so far influenced him, that with his present amount of experience, he could not be induced to address the members individually, by any consideration or persuasion whatever, which his spiritual friends and the local preachers could bring forward. Some objected to his course, and urged him to adopt the usual method. But still his backwardness stood in the way. The result was that another leader was chosen. The new leader, however, not only did all they wanted, but more too, so that he really wearied the members with too much speaking. R. R. Roberts was then again induced to take charge of the class, at the earnest solicitation of the members, making them, as they requested it, a partial promise that he would speak to them as soon as he felt qualified to do so, or could muster sufficient fortitude to enable him to bear so great a cross. He gradually got the better of his retiring disposition and habits, so far as to make small beginnings toward the full performance of his duties as a leader. He was aided by Mr. Caughey, his brother-in-law, and others, who would frequently speak to the members of the class on his behalf. He continued to hold prayer meetings as before; and as those meetings were then often connected with class meetings, he would generally begin or conclude by singing and prayer, while some of the other brethren would speak to the class. The meetings, during the summer, were held at the house of James Stevenson, sen. Here he would sometimes speak to some of the members; and thus, by degrees, he became trained in the performance of his duty. He generally went with the local preachers to their meetings, and for the most

part concluded them by singing and prayer; but would neither exhort nor attempt to preach. The country was rapidly filling with inhabitants, and the congregations were large, as the people came from a great distance, there being no other religious meeting then in the settlement. The local preacher, M'Clelland, was perhaps the first who ever talked to him about preaching or speaking in public. After conversing several times with him, Mr. M'Clelland firmly believed it to be his duty to break through difficulties and commence preaching; but still he declined to make any attempt, urging, as a reason, his great incompetency, and the magnitude, sanctity and vast importance of the ministerial office. He pursued the same course of life until the spring of 1801, his mind, however, still laboring under the deepest convictions of his call to the ministry, which rendered him very uneasy, even so affecting him as frequently to make him unfit for any efficient wordly duties.

In the month of August, 1798, his sister, Elizabeth, was married to Wm. Lindsay. This left Robert R. Roberts without a house-keeper. She was all along his favorite sister; and as she had been his sharer in toil during the previous year, especially amid the tribulations of the winter, his former strong brotherly attachment to her was greatly increased. He felt solitary after Elizabeth left him, and had she remained single, and consented still to live with him, it is probable he never would have married. On this point, however, nothing certain can be stated. From the marriage of Elizabeth, he lived with his father, until married himself.

In November, the hunting season again commenced. It was opened in the chase of racoons. Robert R., his brother, Lewis, and John M'Granahan, a famous hunter, went in company, with dogs and guns. Presently some were treed by the dogs. R. R. Roberts climbed up a leaning chesnut-tree, in search of one that had ascended,

and after much trouble in following the animal from limb to limb, succeeded finally in shaking it down. It lay as dead, but soon revived from the stun of the fall, and gave vigorous battle to the dogs. All the adventures of "coon-hunting" were enjoyed by the young woodsmen, the details of which would occupy, without adequate profit, many of our pages. And again we would say, let those who are fond of the narrative converse a few evenings with an old experienced "coon-hunter," and we promise them they will be highly amused; but whether, in their circumstances, they will receive much profitable knowledge, we are not prepared to say.

They continued their hunting up to the first of January, with considerable success and some profit. In the beginning of January, 1799, perhaps on the second day of the month, they went, with three horses laden with skins, to Greensburg. The deer skins amounted to fifty or sixty; the number of racoon skins was considerable, and then there was the skin of the black fox, which cost Mr. Roberts the long and wearisome chase just mentioned; there was also the skin of the thievish wild-cat which made such havoc of the hunter's deer hams in the spring-house, and which he shot by torch-light, on the last night of its robbery—a sample of many a human being who continues in concealed evil until he is finally caught, and receives his just retribution. The deer-skins at that time sold high, commanding twenty-five cents a pound; and as they weighed from five to ten pounds each, the average would be about eight, which would bring about two dollars a skin. The racoon and other skins were proportionably high. The entire amount of their peltry was therefore about one hundred and fifty dollars, a sum of no small amount to persons under their circumstances. They applied the proceeds of their furs principally to the purchase of clothing, of which they were then very much in

need. From Greensburg they proceeded to Ligonier, where they remained a few weeks.

Before we proceed any further in our narrative, we will say a few words on the privations incident toward settling this new country.

In the first settlement of this region, all the provisions had to be taken from Cassewago, or Meadville, by the settlers, and they had to pack them on their backs. They could not then pack on horse-back; because they had neither grain, pasture, nor fodder, on which to feed their horses; and the expense of keeping them exceeded the benefit derived from them at this period of their improvements.

A more advanced resort was to obtain provisions by canoes. But this was attended with such danger, and liable to so many interruptions, both by low and high water, that it could not be depended on as any certain, much less permanent mode of supply.

Next, recourse was had to packing on horse-back. This had been the common way of conveying provisions in Western Pennsylvania previous and up to this period. All the salt was thus packed and conveyed across the mountains from Maryland and Eastern Pennsylvania. Store-goods, iron, and other materials, were brought in the same way. There were probably no wagon roads across the mountains at that time, or, if there were any, they were so bad that packing was the most expeditious, as well as the cheapest mode of conveying such articles as were needed, and could not then be manufactured in the west.

Precisely the same state of things remained between Ligonier and Shenango, as that which existed between the east and west of the mountains. At first, the mode of conveyance was up the Alleghany and French Creek to Cassewago, and then by packing on the back and traveling on foot to Shenango. Next they tried boating up the She-

nango; but this mode failed. Afterward the pack-horse was resorted to. A path was then made through Butler and Mercer, which reduced the distance one third. There were neither wagons nor wagon roads in these days in Mercer and Butler counties; and the old mode of packing, which was just being laid aside in crossing the mountains, was resorted to, as a matter of course, by the pioneer Roberts and his associates, in bringing provisions for their supply. Owing to these causes, provisions, when brought to Shenango, were exceedingly dear; and, moreover, money was very scarce with the first settlers; or, rather, those who had little or no money, were the persons who originally settled there, and that chiefly because they had no money, or very little of it.

The sufferings of the first settlers were, therefore, very considerable. We will furnish a few specimens: Robert R. Roberts, in the summer of 1797, just before his sister, Elizabeth, reached him, lived altogether on squirrels and some salt for three weeks, as before stated, in consequence of which he became lean, emaciated and weak. Mr. Thos. Jolly, who, in the spring of 1797, located the farm subsequently owned by John Leech, sen., paid, in the year 1778, four silver dollars, at Cassewago, for two bushels of corn meal, carrying one bushel home on his back, and then going a second time for the other, thus traveling eighty-eight miles in all. In the same year, (1788,) Mr. Jolly lived from the first of April to the end of June, a period of three months, on bad potatoes, without any other nourishment whatever. His teeth became loose, as he said, for want of exercise in chewing. For the space of six weeks, in the winter of 1798, the whole family of the Roberts, and most of the other settlers, had no bread of any kind. When Mr. Caughey's house was consumed by fire, five persons put up a new one, fourteen feet square, in one day, and covered it, without having any thing to eat.

CHAPTER IV.

CALL TO THE MINISTRY.

ROBERT R. ROBERTS and his brother, Lewis, remained three or four weeks in Westmoreland county after they had sold their furs. During their stay, Robert was married to Miss Elizabeth Oldham, daughter of Thomas and Hannah Oldham, of York county, Pennsylvania. He was then a few months over twenty years of age. Mrs. Roberts was born November 8th, being then about two months over twenty-three years of age. With Mrs. Roberts he had been acquainted before he set out for Shenango, in 1796; but, from all we can learn, no previous step toward matrimonial engagements had been taken, with any seriousness, until his present visit. The courtship was brief, and consisted only in a very few preliminaries, unaccompanied with many of the usual formalities of such arrangements. With the particulars we are not specially acquainted, except that the whole was consummated within the compass of a few days. They both, however, had previously had a full knowledge of each other's character, and the family relations, for several years.

About the first of February, 1799, this being about two weeks after their marriage, R. R. Roberts, his wife, and brother, Lewis, set out from Ligonier for Shenango, with four horses. One of the horses Mrs. Roberts rode, with the accompaniment of a good sized pack, which was placed on the saddle, and on which she herself sat. The other three horses were heavily laden with packs, and Robert and Lewis walked, driving or leading the three horses. The materials packed consisted of provisions, clothing and bed-clothes, with dishes, pots and such other utensils as were necessary for house-keeping in a very economical and plain style, and could be taken by this mode of con-

veyance. A good supply of cast iron kettles, for making sugar, formed a very necessary part of the outfit. These were well cleaned and then packed in the flour bags, so as to be carried with the greatest safety and ease, as well as to make the packs of the least possible bulk. The latter was an important consideration, as the horses had frequently to press their way through brush and low underwood, and also to go through narrow passages or paths that ran close to trees or the branches of trees, in which difficult places all are aware bulky packs would be much more liable to be overturned than small ones. Our young adventurers were raised too just before the packing business across the mountains had ceased, and they were, therefore, acquainted with all the ins and outs of the entire packing system. Thus equipped, they set out on their journey, prepared to stop any where, and encamp in the woods for the night, their ready provisions and cooking utensils being so adjusted, either in the packs or attached to them, as to be easily within reach at any time.

But it seems that no human precaution, however well the means may be arranged and preconcerted, can avoid all accidents and disappointment. Some of their sugar-kettles were broken by the packs striking against trees, or jutting, sharp pointed limbs, when the horses were urged too near them by the narrowness of the path, or the contiguity of logs or other jostling impediments.

An event happened during this journey which their generally well devised foresight could not prevent. Breaking a sugar-kettle or two, even when there is no money in possession to re-place them, are occurrences of trivial importance compared with the dangers and miseries of lying out at night, surrounded with howling wolves, being well drenched in rain, and having hungry appetites. Under the former life and limb are perfectly safe; but by the latter both are seriously endangered. Toward evening one day, as they were

on their journey, Lewis, and his two pack-horses, proceeded somewhat in advance of the horses of his brother, Robert. Night came on, and the path was so obscured that Robert and his newly married wife were compelled to remain in the woods, or rather in a bushy prairie, till morning. As the horses had already got out of the path, they feared to venture onward, knowing that, under the circumstances, they were as liable to go the wrong way as the right. They, therefore, thought it most prudent to stay for the night just where they were. To Robert, this was no difficult matter, as he had been, for the two preceding years, pretty well trained to such adventures. To his bride, the event was only new, as she was made of as good material as he for enduring hardships of this character. No person of her sex was ever better prepared to take a first lesson in such an adventure, or to remember the instruction for the future. Lewis had all the provisions on his horses; and, of course, they had to pass the night supperless, though they had eaten nothing since breakfast, which was taken early in the morning. They encamped in the open air. This was in the first week of February, the snow still lying on the ground, and the rigor of winter's cold and blasts still continuing. When they were about to fall asleep, wrapped in their blankets and over-coats, the wolves began to howl around most lustily, and so near to them that they were afraid to go asleep, lest their noisy neighbors would favor them with a more intimate visit. The night, as a matter of course, was spent sleepless, and not without several inquiries on her part and answers on his, respecting the wolves and the danger of their being devoured by them. "Robert," said she, "they will certainly eat us before morning." "No, Betsy," was the reply, "they will be afraid to approach us; and if they do, this half burned stick, with its red blaze, will terrify them so that they will never face it to assault us." Many inquiries like

this were made, which were as satisfactorily answered by him.

As soon as it was day, the packs were placed on the horses. Mrs. Roberts got on her easy seat on the pack, surmounted by the bed-clothes of the night, and Robert threaded on before her, leading his horse, until he found the path they had lost the evening before. They then pursued their course until they reached the hut where Lewis spent the night. They congratulated themselves on arriving, that their resting place, poor as it was, had more desirable accommodations than that in which Lewis had staid; for the house was most miserable and wretched, every person and every thing in it being literally covered with filth. The resident family had been privileged with feasting on a recently killed bear, and all things around had the impress of the greasy dainties. By saturated proportions of ashes with bear's-oil, both the clothes and persons of the inmates, as well as the few pieces of rude furniture, presented no very sightly appearance. Mr. Roberts proceeded onward, waiting, however, just long enough to see things as they were, and to afford Lewis time to get ready for starting. After traveling a short distance, they stopped to eat their cold breakfast in the woods, February though it was; very glad indeed that they had escaped a night's misery in the house where Lewis put up. With adventures similar to these, they continued their journey until they reached Shenango, where they were greeted by the father of R. R. Roberts, and all the members of the family, as well as the neighbors generally.

However strange such scenes as these may seem to those of our day, who live in old settled countries, especially those who reside in cities, and ride in easy carriages, or who travel by stage-coaches, steamboats and railroad cars; yet all who settle in new countries view them as common, every-day and unavoidable occurrences.

On the arrival of R. R. Roberts, with his newly married wife, in Shenango, they lived in the cabin in which he and his sister, Elizabeth, had resided, and which had been lying unoccupied since the preceding August, the time at which Elizabeth was married to Mr. Lindsay. This cabin was about twelve feet square. The logs were small, and round or unhewed. The door was low, so that a person of ordinary height had to stoop considerably in entering. It was made of clapboards, and hung on wooden hinges, which frequently had to be greased in order to prevent squeaking. It was put together by wooden pins, there being not even a single nail in it, nor in the whole house. It was fastened with a wooden latch, or rather a wooden pin on the inside; and with a strong tow string on the outside, which was tied to a pin in one of the logs, when the inmates went into the fields, or from home. In the place of a window, there was a hole between two logs, near the fire place, which gave them sufficient light to eat by. It was closed when necessary with a little board fitted to its size, and fastened with wooden pegs, or small pins; and when the weather was very cold, it was stuffed with some old garments. Mostly, however, neither the closing nor stuffing was considered of any importance. An occasional puff of cold fresh air was deemed no annoyance, as they thought none but mere invalids, or the fastidiously nice, would object to any such imaginary inconvenience. The chimney was a wooden frame at the end of the house. A few of the under logs were cut out about six feet wide, to make an opening both for the chimney and hearth. The frame was raised first to the height of the opening, and then to the comb, with cat and clay, or clay mortar mixed with chopped grass, and short pieces of split oak laths, about two feet long, crossing so as to form a square or oblong chimney. The mortar was placed between the pieces of wood, and the inside and outside were also well plastered

with the same, so that the chimney, when finished, had externally the appearance of one unbroken stone, or muddy colored brick, which appearance it retained until the rain washed the mortar away. The inside of the chimney, up to the cat and clay part, was lined with stones laid in mud mortar or with large flags standing perpendicularly. This work is frequently performed so carelessly, that the fire often reaches the wood; and holes are made large enough for animals the size of a dog to pass through, which, with careless tenants, remain sometimes unstopped for years. The floor was of puncheons well smoothed and tightly jointed, so as to form an even surface. The hearth was of rude freestone, fitted in without the convenience of a stone-hammer, or any other requisite instrument, except that some of the very irregular corners were knocked off by the axe, when a very large hole would be the result in some untouched part of the stone. The crevices between the logs were filled up with chunks of wood in the inside, and plastered with clay mortar on the outside. The loft was supported with round peeled poles, laid over with small chesnut poles, each peeled and split in two, and the flat side laid under on the joist poles. The crevices between were filled with chesnut-bark, or thin pieces of wood, to prevent the clay from falling through, which was laid over the whole so as to form an even surface with the highest parts of the poles. The roof was supported by rows of poles at proper distances, covered with clapboards, which were kept in their places by other corresponding rows of poles, laid over the clapboards, so that the wind could not move them, the under row of poles being called ribs, and the upper weight poles. The latter are kept in place by blocks of wood called knees, braced by a button pole, which rested on the eve-bearers. These terms are peculiar to the cabin system, and are familiar to all who build and occupy these habitations. As a matter of course these roofs leak. The leaking, however,



varies, as the boards are well or ill laid, or as the wind more or less displaces them, or as time rots their edges and outward ends. Or should none of these defects exist, in high winds and rains, water will beat in between the crevices of the boards; and in very heavy showers, it will run over their edges, where they are not entirely level, or where the joints are not properly broken.

The *furniture* of the cabin next calls for a brief notice. This consisted of a puncheon table, supported by four wooden legs of rude workmanship, and inserted in the table by holes made with an auger. The axe, the saw, the auger and perhaps the drawing-knife, were the only instruments used in making not only the table, but the other articles of furniture also. Rough stools served for chairs. The bedstead was composed of a clapboard bottom, placed on two parallel sticks, or bed-sides; and these were supported by crotchets or forks, which served the purpose of bed posts. The bedstead had no end boards, the clapboards rendering them unnecessary. A smaller fixture, which served the place of a second bedstead, large enough to hold one person, was placed in another corner. A pot and bake-oven were the principal parts of the cooking apparatus. Other little conveniences of a similar description, completed the original furniture of Robert R. Roberts. There were neither bureaus, chests, trunks, cupboards nor any thing of the kind within his cabin. There was, however, a shelf or two, of thin puncheons or broad clapboards, upheld by wooden pins, stuck in auger holes bored in the logs, which served an excellent purpose, several little articles being placed on them which were occasionally used. Wooden pins, too, were plentifully stuck in the logs at convenient distances, on which were hung the various garments not in immediate or daily use. Nor must we forget the gun rack, which was always placed over the door; and consisted of two little hooked pieces of wood, or forked

branches, or eagle's claws, attached to the walls, in various ways to suit the different tastes of the proprietors. It was placed above the door that it might be out of the reach of children, and also easy of access in case the Indians or some game unexpectedly made their appearance. A small peeled pole, suspended by strings from the joist which was second in order from the chimney, was also an indispensable fixture; as on this the pumpkin slices were hung in decorous ringlets until thoroughly dry, and thus preserved for future use; on it, too, wet clothes were dried in rainy weather.

The *provisions* of the cabin consisted principally of potatoes, pumpkins, turnips, hommony and eorn meal. The last mentioned article, during the few first years, before mills were erected, was made by being pounded in a hommony trough. The first wheat that was raised was ground in a hand-mill, and used without bolting or sifting. The meat was venison or racoons. The best racoon hams were first frosted and then smoked; both of which processes, as already stated, very much improved their flavor. The venison hams were dried, and not unfrequently smoked; while the fat parts of the deer were eaten when fresh, or were eorned; and, moreover, sometimes very savory food was prepared from the lean parts by "jerking" them—a process which consists of first cutting into thin slices, and then thoroughly drying.

When Robert R. Roberts had got fairly settled in his cabin after his marriage, he and his elder sister, Sarah, took a journey to Ligonier in May; and on their return brought two cows with them. During the greater part of the journey they camped out at night. In some places, there were no houses; while, in others, the houses were so far apart that they could not regulate their stages so as to stop at them, ten miles a day being as much as they could travel, having to drive the cows, and give them time to graze and rest.

During the summer of 1799, he acted as class-leader, though with much reluctance, as he deemed himself inadequate to the task. He thought that James Stevenson, sen., or John Caughey, could fill the station much better than he. Others, however, thought differently; and he was, though not without some protestations against it on his part, still induced to hold the office. It was, furthermore, a general opinion that he ought to preach the Gospel, in view of his acknowledged talents, his excellent Christian character, and the great prudence and other ministerial qualifications which he seemed so eminently even then to possess.

The approach of winter opened the hunting for the season. In those days it formed the winter occupation of all who had sufficient skill to enable them to pursue it with profit. In September, racoon hunting began, which continued for sometime, and was succeeded by deer hunting. R. R. Roberts, with others, pursued this employment with great alacrity. Sometimes it was followed at the risk, not only of comfort and health, but also of life.

Of the perils of hunting, we give only one more instance at this time. At the close of winter, in 1800, Robert R. Roberts, one evening about dark, passed by Mr. Jolly, who was in his yard, and entered his house without speaking, and then lay down on the floor before the fire. This house was two miles distant from Mr. Roberts'. Mr. Jolly was surprised at Mr. Roberts passing him without speaking, especially as he was always very courteous, and ever ready to exchange all the civilities of life. This unusual conduct led Mr. Jolly to follow him into the house for the purpose of knowing the cause. He found him unable to utter a word, and was, therefore, additionally surprised. He soon ascertained, however, that he was very sick. Mrs. Jolly furnished all the cordials she had within reach. Having some ginger, she made it into tea, and gave him some, which manifestly relieved him Mr.

Jolly rubbed his arms, legs and body, which proved an additional relief. By these and other kind attentions, about midnight he was so far recovered as to be able to speak. He then informed them that he had pursued a deer all day with his dog, Cæsar, through the snow, which was just deep enough to tire a footman, but not so deep as to impede materially the progress of the deer. About sun-down he felt himself exhausted, and made for the nearest habitation. With the utmost difficulty he was enabled to reach their residence. Had the house been another mile, or even half a mile further, it is probable he would have fallen down exhausted, and been frozen to death before morning. This instance shows the enticing nature of the chase. Under its influence the hunter is led to follow the wounded deer hour after hour, in constant expectation of reaching his prey; but finally he becomes exhausted, and leaves off the pursuit, retiring to his home, or the nearest habitation; or else, encamping in the woods, is probably frozen to death, or, if alive, in the morning retreats with exhausted strength.

Early in the spring, or rather just at the close of winter, *sugar making* becomes the business of the season. During this period, Robert R. Roberts engaged in it, assisted by his wife, his sister, Nancy, afterward Mrs. M'Granahan, and his little nephew, John, accompanied, as he always was on such occasions, with his dog, Yuno. The camp was north of the Little Shenango, where the road now crosses the stream by a bridge, a short distance above the residence of Wm. Leech, and about a mile from the Methodist meeting-house. The creek there runs close to the high ground on the south. The camp lay north of the creek, stretching in that direction about half a mile, where it met high land. The ground is somewhat elevated at the creek, where the camp at which they boiled the water was built, and is within a few rods of the present bridge. The sugar camp ground north of the camp and creek is much lower

than the camp itself, and is intersected with the channels of former runs and brooks. There was much snow on the ground when they commenced boiling. The water during the day ran freely, and they concluded to continue boiling all night, in order to preserve the sugar water. Shortly after dark it began to rain very hard: the snow, too, during the day had nearly all melted; and the consequence was that the Little Shenango rose very rapidly and spread over the bottom, leaving between them and their home to the north a sea of water, which, with the intersecting channels, rendered it impassable in the night, and even in the day time, without resorting to swimming over the channels, or bridging them with trees. The main creek itself was immediately south of this vast body of water, and could not be crossed by any means within their reach. The night was dark; and the water rose so fast that it soon surrounded the camp. The weather likewise became cold toward morning. To save the fire, it was transferred to the large sugar trough, the reservoir for the sugar water, and placed upon some wood in the bottom. Next, they all got on a large fallen tree, which was somewhat elevated above the water, and on which they could walk backward and forward some distance, as it had a smooth trunk. This they constantly did to keep themselves warm. They also floated the trough containing the fire, along side the tree of refuge, so as to obtain all the warmth from it they could. After a while, however, the bottom of the trough, and that part of each side which was contiguous to the fire, burned through, so that they were forced to pace with increased speed the trunk of the tree during the remainder of the night, in order to preserve as much warmth as possible, drenched as they were with the cold rain and then stiffened with frost. When day-light came, the road they had to go for half a mile toward home, presented itself as a sea, abounding, as before remarked, with a number of deep

channels. Their mode of escape was the following. Robert R. carried his little nephew, John, on his back, probing the way before him till he came to one of the channels. He then placed the little boy on a log or limb of a tree, until, with his axe, he cut down an entire tree, causing it to fall across the channel. He next conducted his wife and sister over, taking them by the hand as they went over the log bridge, and wading with them in the spaces between the channels up to their middle in water. After constructing a number of similar temporary bridges, and proceeding in the manner just described, they got on the high ground and soon reached home. The little dog, Yuno, however, kept his position on the large log till the water had so far subsided that his master could approach him; and thus he was saved from a watery grave.

We have no specimens of his early compositions, except some poetical effusions. Indeed composition, as an important branch of instruction, does not appear to have formed any part of his education: nor does it appear to have received much attention, in those times, from any who had no more tuition than he. Still he amused himself sometimes by making poetry, in which art he might probably have excelled, or at least become a medium author, had he cultivated it. At an early date, perhaps in the winter of 1797-8, he wrote a poetic essay to Jacob Cavode, the theme of which was religion, and the particular point dwelt upon, the doctrines of Calvinism. A copy of this is in our possession; but it would be of no special use to publish it. We will give, however, a specimen of his poetical genius. He and the Rev. Thomas M'Clelland, were on very familiar terms of intercourse, and they appear to have exercised themselves, among other sallies of wit, in giving and answering puzzles in poetry. The following enigma, was composed in March, 1800, by R. R. Roberts, and addressed to his friend, M'Clelland. Though it will not bear a most

rigid criticism, it at least will go to confirm the opinion just expressed, that if he had cultivated the art he would doubtless have succeeded in some degree as a poet.

“The earth is full of wonders : I am one :
Though animated nature I have none ;
Yet life I have, which you may plainly see,
When in the verdant spring you look at me.
Sometimes in lonely forests I am seen—
Sometimes in fields and in the meadows green :
The place in which I love most to reside,
Is a rich bottom, by some river side.
In me the farmer greatly doth delight,
Attending on me both by day and night.
I greatly please his palate and his taste :
My form is high, and graceful is my waist.
When on my head a covering I wear,
All clothed in green, 'tis then that I appear.
I'm oft made use of even for many things
And most when spring her glorious beauty brings.
In short, abundant wants I do supply :
Now if you can, tell who or what am I.”

From the relation in which he stood to his father's family, the care of it principally devolved upon him. Hence, the greater part of them were not agreed that he should become a traveling preacher.

In consequence of his piety and acknowledged superior talents, he was by common consent, designated for the ministry. He was peculiarly retiring in his habits, and rather shunned than courted any thing that would lead to an open expression of his sentiments on this subject. Indeed, he seemed to shrink from the responsibility of the ministry under a sense of his want of due qualifications. His religious experience and conduct entirely comported with his profession, so as to secure the unlimited confidence of his Christian brethren, as well as those who were not members of the Church. While he resided at Shenango, before he became a traveling preacher, the same good Christian conduct was manifest in him, as when he resided at Ligonier.

Many times, he was solicited by his Christian friends, to exercise in public; but for a long time declined. Before his marriage, and while his sister, Elizabeth, resided with him, he was very much exercised on the subject of preaching. He would frequently leave his work, sometimes even his horses standing at the plough, and go into the solitary woods, which were contiguous, mount a log or stump, and address the trees as a congregation of hearers, going through the different parts of his discourse, and exercising his voice with as much elocutionary skill as he was master of. Often did his sister find him in this kind of exercise; and in it he was considerably schooled before he could be persuaded to address a congregation, even in exhortation. At first she was averse to his becoming an itinerant preacher, as the wants of the other members of the family called for his assistance. When, however, she saw how deeply he was affected and how greatly he was exercised on the subject, she frequently and earnestly urged him to do his duty.

Some individuals have supposed that his marriage was hastened, so as to relieve him from the responsibilities of the itinerant ministry. For only a few of the itinerants of that age were married men; and those who were, had very little provision for their families. After he had entered into matrimonial bonds, which, as before stated, was at the early age of twenty, it is not marvelous that the itinerant field was rather a discouraging prospect to him, as his pecuniary resources were but slender, his property consisting of nothing more than a piece of partially improved land of very little value. Nevertheless, his convictions of duty remained as strong after marriage, as they were before. He was still distressed in his mind, and often he cried out, "Woe! is me if I preach not the Gospel."

In this condition his spirits sometimes became so depressed, that, as already mentioned, he could do little or no work. . . . Frequently after digging up a few grubs, or cutting

down a tree or two, he would sit down and reflect on his situation the remainder of the day. At other times, while his horses were left standing for a long time in the plough, he would be seated on the beam musing on ministerial and other sacred things, or praying in the corner of the fence, or exercising in preaching. These circumstances led some people to conclude that he was indolent. But the fact was, he refused to fulfill his obligations to God, and his mind could not rest satisfied with doing what was not his proper work. Sometimes, however, he would make up his mind to attempt the performance of his duty; and then his enjoyments would return, and he could attend to his daily occupation with ease and regularity. But when his thoughts would recur to his want of talents, his youth, and his inexperience, together with the privations and trials of an itinerant Methodist preacher, his spirits would sink and he would refuse to obey the sacred call. Then darkness of mind and dejection of heart would again overwhelm him, so as to unfit him for business. As he kept these feelings entirely within his own breast for a long time, it is not to be wondered at that those who knew not his real condition, should misinterpret his case.

It is proper here to remark, that in consequence of his resisting the calls to preach the Gospel, he was signally unsuccessful in all the worldly pursuits in which he engaged. This was remarked to the writer, by his wife and sister, Nancy, as being clearly indicated in all his undertakings after it was manifest that duty required him to assume the ministerial office. Nor was it noticed by his friends alone: it became very evident to himself. Under the influence of this consideration, in connection with others of a weightier kind, he at last gave his consent to do his best in discharging what he believed to be his solemn and imperative duty.

There seems to us, a happy medium between the course of R. R. Roberts and that of many others. He delayed

to enter on this great work after he saw it was his duty to commence it. Others enter upon it hastily, either before they are called, or before they are fully certain of their call. The golden mean is to go *when sent*; but not to go *until sent*. The conviction may rest deep in the mind of some that it will be their duty to enter the sacred office after a particular time. For such to delay until they are furnished with those preparations that are reasonable and that the nature of the pastoral office demands, all men of candor will say, is an act of wisdom and consistency.

On the 8th of September, 1800, his maternal grandfather, Thomas Richford, died, after an illness of four weeks. Nothing remarkable is connected with this event worthy of mention, except the dutiful regard paid to him by all the members of the Roberts family, in providing for his wants, and in nursing him in the most careful manner.

According to some accounts, Robert R. Roberts obtained license to exhort from Rev. Thornton Fleming at a quarterly meeting at Mumford's, near Meadville, in the summer of 1800. If a license was then given him, he must have been licensed, according to the economy of the Church, before that time; as licenses are not granted at quarterly meetings to exhort: they are only renewed on these occasions. It is probable that the preacher of the circuit, without any application from him, gave the license, he, however, making no use of it, and that this license was renewed, in common with others, by Mr. Fleming, at the time referred to. At any rate it is certain that no use was made of the license, and that the grant of it was intended to urge him to do what all believed was his duty. A conversation occurred between Bishop Roberts, T. Fleming, and H. B. Bascom, in Mr. M'Granahan's tent, at the Pittsburg conference camp meeting in 1828, the purport of which was that Mr. Fleming had licensed him.

On Friday, 28th of February, 1801, Robert Morgan

Roberts, father of Robert R., died in great peace at She-nango. On the night before his death, he remarked that he would die on the following night. He informed his friends then present that they might go home and return the next night, as that would be the time of his departure. On the next day, none but his daughters, Sarah and Elizabeth, were with him. In the morning, he desired Robert and Nancy not to leave him; but, thinking his expressed persuasion about dying of no consequence, and not considering him dangerous, they went out to make sugar. According to his prediction, however, he expired that night at 10 o'clock, his daughters, Elizabeth and Sarah, only being with him. He was a meek and pious man; and lived and died a devoted Christian.

As we have already remarked, M'Clelland, the local preacher, was probably the first person that gravely and pointedly conversed with R. R. Roberts on the subject of preaching. He told him that it was his duty to break through all the hindrances in his way, without delaying any longer. At a meeting held at Rev. Jacob Gurwell's, on Christmas day, 1801, Mr. M'Clelland, after having preached, requested him publicly to conclude the services with an exhortation. This so much frightened and disconcerted him that he retired from the house to the barn. That morning he had killed four turkeys and taken them to his cabin, after which he told his wife it was time to go to the meeting. Accordingly they went. This circumstance was related to me by Mrs. Roberts herself. Perhaps his mind had been too much occupied in the morning to engage without previous notice in the work of exhortation. At all events he declined, by retiring as silently as he could to the place just mentioned, and thus got out of the way of the zealous and importunate preacher. His backwardness led M'Clelland to hand him the subjoined communication, which was composed shortly after the occurrence, and had

neither date nor signature to it. It purports to be a *dream*, but was only written in the form of one. It is a very sensible document, clearly and forcibly drawn up and well adapted to meet the various objections of Mr. Roberts. As might be expected, it made a powerful impression on his mind, so much so that he was led immediately to conclude that he would endeavor to discharge his duty without further delay. The following is the very appropriate reasoning of the communication. It was given to him, as already stated, a short time after the Christmas of 1801 :

“MY VERY DEAR BROTHER,—May grace, mercy and peace be multiplied unto you, and may Gospel benefits be your portion in time and in eternity.

“The reason why I trouble you with these few lines, is to apologize for my recent behavior to you in public, which, I confess, was not strictly right, though well meant. Pardon my rashness and Irish bluntness, as manifested to you at brother Gurwell’s. If you suffered at that time, I was sharer with you in the bitter cup. But it is all past. May I learn wisdom for the time to come.

“My body was a little afflicted sometime ago, but my soul had a comfortable realizing view of the eternal world. My thoughts being various, they at length turned to you, when I had the following dream :

“I thought I had got free from this region of misery and woe, and was admitted into the world of spirits, standing awhile in the presence of God and the Savior, and then ranging the golden streets of the eternal city ; also greeting the blood-besprinkled band, and having fellowship with the saints in light, joining with them in the song of Moses and of the Lamb.

“My mind was for sometime diverted from the sweet employment by the following representation :

“I thought I saw your father in glorious apparel, having a crown of righteousness on his head, and in his hands

palms of victory, and associated with another happy spirit that I took to be his bosom companion. I next beheld bright thrones, which as far surpassed that of Solomon as heavenly things surpass those that are earthly. There was one in an exalted station, and on it was placed a crown dazzling with brightness : it was fixed near those of the prophets, apostles, martyrs, and eminent ministers of the Gospel of our Lord. I drew nigh to behold it, and was informed it was for you.

“I thought the Savior commanded that you should be brought forward to see what was here in reservation for you. In a short time a seraph fulfilled the high command, and you were placed in the presence of the great King. As you came forward, I thought you uttered the words, ‘Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man known the joys of this happy place.’ The Savior fixed his eyes upon you, which kindled in your heart a burning love to him, causing you to neglect every thing else. I thought he addressed you in the language of softness and affection, pointing at the same time to the throne and crown, and saying, ‘Come and see what I have prepared for thee.’ Being strengthened by these gracious smiles and words, you meekly cried out,

‘Tis mercy all, immense and free,
For O! my God, it found out me.’

Overcome by the Divine presence, you fell at the glorious feet of the Savior, and poured out a flood of gratitude. He then gave you a divine touch, at which you arose, and also said to you, ‘Son, thou art ever with me. All this glory shall be thine. It is true, the happiness is great, and the reward is excellent; yet the way thereto is not only difficult, but contrary to flesh and blood.’ I thought you replied, ‘Make known to me the way, and in thy strength will I walk therein.’ He then said, ‘Go quickly forth among the numerous crowds of earth, and let love and pity

raise thy voice aloud to inform them that I am willing to save the chief of sinners from hell and a dreadful eternity. Tell them that they must repent, obtain pardon, be made holy, and be thus prepared for this place of endless joy.' I thought the words rested on your soul with the weight of a mountain, and you became pale and motionless, till at length the Lord gave you a second touch, and revived your drooping spirits. Being strengthened, you said, 'Let it not offend thee, and I, who am but dust, will speak. I have thought it my duty to preach the Gospel; but I feel myself all unfit for such a task.' The answer given was, 'I, who have called thee to the work, can qualify thee for it.' You replied, 'That which deters me most, is, I am not holy enough to stand before those who out-shine me in real piety, and to give them instruction.' The Savior then said, 'If thou hadst faithfully followed the teachings of my Spirit, thou wouldst have been holy, and mightst have been useful to mankind; but the time past cannot be recalled.' To this you replied, 'If I had gifts as many ministers have, I think it would be no cross to me.' The command was then given you, 'Improve what thou hast, and more will be imparted.' At this you said, 'With shame I acknowledge that in me pride remains, and I know an honest preacher is despised by many.' The answer was, 'Read that part of the first chapter of 1st Corinthians, which begins at the twenty-sixth verse.' You then said, 'Let me speak but once more. I have brothers and friends that sometimes criticise; and before them I have not courage to speak.' The answer to this was, 'Such of them as love me will greatly rejoice that thou doest my will; and such as are not in the way to heaven, let love constrain thee to warn of their danger. Remember what he said who lifted up his eyes in torment, "I have five brethren!" Let the thought come home to thy heart. Warn them honestly. It may be they will hear thy words. But, remember, if

thou dost not follow me in the way I mark out, thou shalt have in the lower world crosses and disappointments, hardness of heart and few consolations, and if by my aid, thou dost at last reach this blessed place, it will be through the fire, and thou shalt suffer loss. But if thou takest up this cross, and dost follow me, doing my work, thou shalt be gainer in time, and shall reap immortal joy throughout eternity.'

"After this you were conducted back whence you came. I thought you moved heavily along, and, after a deep sigh, uttered these words: 'Woe is me, if I preach not the Gospel.' The distress I felt on your account awoke me, and put an end to my dream."

In the spring of 1801, Joseph Shane, a young man of Baltimore, was sent to Shenango circuit, from the Baltimore conference. There had been a circuit of that name the year previous, but it did not embrace the neighborhood where R. R. Roberts resided. James Quinn was on the circuit north, called Erie. He and Mr. Shane exchanged labors with each other, and had much success. They held a watch-night sometime in the summer, at James Stevenson's, sen., who lived, as before stated, in the neighborhood of Mr. Roberts. On this occasion, Mr. Shane had to preach first. Mr. Quinn went to Mr. Roberts, and said to him, "When brother Shane has done preaching, I want you to exhort, and then I shall follow with another sermon." He made little or no reply, but did not, however, promise. Mr. Shane took for his text, "Wisdom is the principal thing," &c. In the sermon he did not appear to enjoy much liberty. Mr. Roberts sat near him, to whom, when the preacher was done, the hymn-book was handed. His mind was considerably engaged during the sermon, and clear views of truth seemed to open before him. He thought he might as well make the attempt; and accordingly spoke about fifteen or twenty minutes, and that with great

freedom to himself, the congregation also being much affected. Toward the close, however, supposing he had committed some mistake, he became a little confused, and finished as soon as he could. Mr. Quinn, as was usual with him, delivered a very profitable sermon, and a fine effect was produced on the assembly. Next morning a young man who lived with Mr. Roberts, observed somewhat pleasantly to him, "Brother Roberts, I thought you were going to preach brother Shane's sermon over again." This mortified him very much; as he did not suppose any person would imagine that he had been induced by vanity to aim at making a display. He himself knew that this was not the case, and he thought if he could do as well as the poorest preacher he had ever heard he would be entirely satisfied.

After this, he was frequently solicited to exhort, but always declined, until he again became very unhappy and uneasy in his mind. At length, however, he determined to make an attempt to preach, let the event be what it might, though he feared greatly that he would fail. His desire to obtain license was made known to the society, by the preacher; but before they could recommend him, it was necessary they should hear him preach. This, to him, was a severe cross, but he endeavored to bear it. His text was, "O Lord, revive thy work." The society on hearing him, recommended him to the quarterly conference, as a proper person to obtain license. This, his first sermon, was preached at James Stevenson's, late in the winter or early in the spring of 1802. He preached two or three times in the neighborhood afterward. As the quarterly meeting of his own circuit was over, the preacher directed him to go to Holme's meeting-house, West Wheeling circuit, in order to obtain license there; or to Doddridge's meeting-house, Ohio circuit, Rev. Thornton Fleming then being presiding elder.

The foregoing is mainly the Bishop's own account of

his first public exercises, from which it appears that he had very humble views of his own performances, though others entertained views entirely different.

He proceeded, according to directions, to Holmes' meeting-house, on Short Creek, where his case was brought forward. They had some debating respecting him, but he got license by a small majority. He was at the same time recommended to travel; for he now determined fully to proceed in the work of the ministry. He, moreover, thought if he could be removed to a distance from his friends, he would have more liberty in preaching. From Short Creek, Ohio, he went to Doddridge's meeting-house, in Spah's neighborhood, Virginia, for the purpose of hearing the presiding elder, Rev. T. Fleming, preach. But as the presiding elder did not arrive at the time, it fell to his lot to address the congregation, he being the only preacher present. The cross to him was great, as he expected every moment the presiding elder would enter the house.

There is a slight discrepancy between the foregoing account and one that follows furnished by Rev. James Quinn. Brother Quinn states that it was at Doddridge's meeting-house he obtained license and was recommended; while the preceding account, from the Bishop himself, ascribes it to Holmes' meeting-house. As he set out, however, to attend the one or the other, after first visiting brother Quinn, the discrepancy is not material. Either of them may have been mistaken, after the lapse of forty years, as neither kept a written memorial. We give the valuable communication of brother Quinn, as it contains important information, both in regard to one of his first attempts at exhortation, and his being licensed to preach and recommended to travel.

"In 1801," says the venerable Quinn, "I was appointed to Erie circuit, and Joseph Shane to Shenango circuit, in whose bounds Robert R. Roberts then resided. In the

course of the year, I spent a week with brother Shane on his circuit, for the purpose of administering baptism, as I was a deacon, and he only a probationer, and unordained. Here I became acquainted with Robert R. Roberts, of whom I had heard so many good things in Jagonier. He took me to his house or cabin, and opened his mind to me freely on the subject of his call to the ministry. But he had great misgivings, and felt deeply sensible of the awful responsibility of the office, and his own inadequacy to fill it. I told him I believed that God had called him to the work, and that he would probably never be satisfied in his own mind until he had made a trial; and, moreover, that the Church could have no action on his case, until she had evidence of his gifts for edification. A few nights after this, we held a watch-night, to which he came on foot, the distance from his house being six or seven miles. Here we prevailed on him to give an exhortation, which was about his first. He delivered it in the costume of a backwoodsman; but it was worthy of gray hairs and broad cloth. All present were perfectly amazed; and brother M'Clelland, who had been a traveling preacher in Ireland, said to me, 'That is the man. He ought to be in the work. He understands the doctrines of the Gospel well, and is a natural logician.'

"I was called by the presiding elder of Redstone district to leave Erie and take the Pittsburg circuit, about Christmas. Sometime in March, 1802, brother Roberts came to one of my appointments on the new circuit, informing me that he had had no rest in his mind since we parted, and that he had determined to leave all, and was now on his way with his wife, to offer himself to the Baltimore conference. This startled me a little, for he had never been licensed either to exhort or preach; neither had he a recommendation from the society or any quarterly meeting conference. I paused awhile. He observed the expression of hesitancy

in me; and I, also, saw afflicting embarrassment in him, which I endeavored to remove by observing, that as Shenango was missionary ground, and the circuit had not been fully organized, I thought we could get his case brought before the quarterly conference of one of the old circuits; and as brother Fleming, the presiding elder, would hold a quarterly meeting at Doddridge's meeting-house, on Ohio circuit, the following Saturday and Sunday, I would write both to him and the quarterly conference, and I doubted not they would take action on the case. He spent the night in restless tossings to and fro, and in the morning concluded he had better return home. But I urged him to do as I had requested. At length he reluctantly took the letter, and went to the quarterly meeting. Brother Shane, providentially, was present on the occasion, upon whose recommendation, along with my own, the conference licensed him to preach, and recommended him to the Baltimore annual conference, at which he was regularly admitted into the itinerant ministry. Thus he was recommended from the circuit, which three years before had recommended myself. As a preacher he was powerful and popular from the beginning."

After being licensed to preach and recommended to the Baltimore conference, he returned home and began to prepare for traveling; though somewhat fearful in regard to his reception, as he was a married man, and but few married men were constituted itinerant preachers in those days. He thought, however, that his mind would be at rest, after having offered his services to the Church, though he should even be rejected. It was probable that he was admitted into the Baltimore conference by a bare majority, as the prejudice against receiving married preachers was then very general and strong, and debarred many worthy men from entering the itinerant ministry. We make this remark on no authentic information. In giving our opinion, we base our hypothesis on the nature of the case drawn from the

state of things at that time. We do not wish to be understood, however, as affirming, that it is unscriptural or unreasonable, to require probationers in the ministry to finish their probation before entering into matrimonial engagements, when they are unmarried at the commencement of the same. For apprentices and minors, entering on any regular business, are justly expected not to make such engagements. But we mean that married men ought not to be disqualified, as married men, from entering the sacred office, or continuing in it; and we moreover think that any Church regulation which thus disqualifies them, savors of Popery and tends to corruption and infamy.

CHAPTER V.

ENTRANCE ON THE ITINERANCY.

WHEN Robert R. Roberts was received on trial in the itinerant ministry by the Baltimore conference, in the spring of 1802, and appointed to Carlisle circuit, he was nearly twenty-four years of age. He disposed of or rather distributed his little personal property, which consisted, as we have seen, chiefly of farming utensils and a few common articles for cooking. Such had been his poverty, and the want of opportunity to collect useful articles, that he had very few to dispose of. There was no need for a vendue, as there were neither bureaus, tables, chairs, sofas nor any thing of the kind to sell. Some of his furniture could obtain no purchasers, such, for instance, as his puncheon table, rough stools and clapboard bedsteads. All his neighbors could make those articles themselves, and, of course, they would not buy. Rev. R. R. Roberts, therefore, distributed them gratuitously among persons that needed them. Some of the more useful, and even some of the cash articles, were

also presented to favorite neighbors and relatives. Mrs. M'Lean, one of his old neighbors, told us in July, 1843, that she still retained the cast iron *spider* or *shallow skillet*, which Rev. R. R. Roberts gave her as a memento, when he set out for his circuit. Though scarcely any thing was sold, yet a few articles were *exchanged* for such little outfit as was requisite for their journey. His two horses, saddles and bridles, were kept for their own use. Their clothes and bed-clothes were put up in packs or bags, and laid on the saddles. Cakes and dried venison being necessary provisions were also put into the packs to save expense. Some cooking utensils too were taken along, as a small coffee-pot, two tin-cups and a couple of spoons. They likewise furnished themselves with some flour and coffee. With these means they calculated that, should their small supply of funds run out, or night overtake them when near no house, they could encamp in the woods, cook their victuals, and sleep in their own bed-clothes.

Indeed every itinerant who collects sufficient furniture for comfortable house-keeping, must, whenever he moves, make considerable sacrifices. A variety of small unsalables must be left behind; which, when they have to be replaced, cost money, or, when dispensed with, cause great domestic inconvenience. Even the water-gourd, the oven-shovel, and a hundred unnamables, will be missed. Those articles too which are sold, will go mostly at a great depreciation; and hence another loss. And those that are retained, create a bill of expense by conveyance. Such inconveniences and losses are always, more or less, connected with the itinerant life. But it has its moral. It cuts the man entirely loose from the world. It scatters into fragments every thing out of which an idol could be made. It is a sheriff's sale of all that pertains to him on earth. And if he and his family are not prepared by these trying events to be heavenly—altogether heavenly, without even a shred

of the earthly, the sensual, or the devilish, appertaining to them, either really or in appearance, then let them return whence they came and leave the itinerancy to those of the right spirit. They should neither touch, taste, nor handle it.

Rev. R. R. Roberts was warmly devoted to his friends. He was the pioneer, and, withal, the head man of his neighborhood. The parting was difficult, and was indeed a touching scene. It seemed as if it would break his heart, and the heart of his wife, to leave all their domestic associations, and go forth as strangers in the wide world. It is true they had not much to leave; but then it was *home*—a home that made them independent, and constituted the foundation of their future comfort and probable wealth. As, however, he had nothing in view but the glory of God, the good of others, and the salvation of his soul, the severance from home's blissful ties had associated with it the highest motives that could influence man.

They crossed the mountains on horse-back, holding meetings by the way in every convenient place. He made his home in York, Pennsylvania, with Mrs. Roberts' mother, the distance of which was about three hundred miles from Shenango.

When he reached York, the small-pox was raging in different directions through his circuit. He and his friends thought it prudent that he should be inoculated before commencing his first round. The operation was performed by an experienced physician, and he himself was so careful that he was very slightly affected.

His colleague was James Smith. He had traveled the circuit the previous year, and was also in charge. It was an extensive circuit, reaching from York into the mountains, and up the Susquehanna, including Carlisle, Turkey Valley, Sherman's Valley, Pfort's Valley, Millerstown and Thompsonstown, on the Juniata, Shippensburg, Chambersburg, Gettysburg, Port Chapel and Berlin. In all

they had about thirty appointments, which they filled in four weeks. Their presiding elder was Wilson Lee, a man of great faith, zeal and usefulness. Rev. R. R. Roberts commenced early in May; and before completing his third round, he had both the small-pox and measles, and likewise lost the two horses belonging to himself and his wife.

While afflicted with the measles he was much enfeebled. When at Shippenburg he became very sick; but not being able to obtain a local brother to officiate for him, he preached himself. His next appointment was at Mr. Bosar's, nine miles distant. In going there he became so ill that he was obliged to dismount and lie down on the way. The thought, however, that some person might see him, and suppose him to be drunk, so affected him that he tried to mount again, and, succeeding, rode to his appointment. On arriving, he immediately went to bed, as it was at a private house. But as the congregation gathered, they urged him to preach, at which he arose and spoke sometime. Next morning the measles made their appearance on him, and it was only then that he knew what was the cause of his sickness.

The family were very kind, and did all they could for his accommodation. They kept him warm and comfortable, and gave him warm drinks. He earnestly desired cold water, but this being strictly forbidden, none was given him. One night, however, while all the family were asleep, he arose, though not without great difficulty, wrapped a blanket around him, and went to the pump, which was on the porch, and there, with considerable labor, succeeded in getting water, which he sipped somewhat slowly. It was very pleasant to his taste, yet he had sufficient control over himself not to take as much as he desired. He returned to bed, fell asleep, and next morning awoke in a perspiration, being materially better. The family knew

nothing of this adventure till after his recovery. He got well very soon, and resumed his ministerial labors. At some appointments they were favored with gracious revivals.

Certain exercises in religious meetings, at this time, afflicted him very much. Frequently some persons would be shouting, some jumping, and others falling down. These exercises confused him exceedingly, and his embarrassments appeared to the people. Some of them remarked to Mr. Smith, his colleague, "We believe brother Roberts to be a good man, and we like him well enough as a young preacher, but there is one thing in his course we cannot comprehend. When our meetings become lively, he stops and has nothing to say." He and Mr. Smith had some conversation on the subject, in which he stated that these exercises so disconcerted him that he was unable to proceed. Mr. Smith requested him to use as much forbearance as he could. The truth seems to be, that when these emotions are the spontaneous effusions of the heart, it would be dangerous to religion to restrain them, especially with much severity. Persons may, in such cases, habituate themselves to unseemly and improper exercises. All, however, should aim at decency and order, in every act of divine service. The sudden emotions of the awakened and penitent form not the proper specimens for religious worship. They are the interjections or exclamations of religion; and though they are not to be classed with demure nouns, pronouns and verbs, yet they have their place; and it would be as unsafe to blot them out of the list of suitable expressions for the affections in the services of religion, as it would be improper, and even dangerous, to place on them the principal stress in judging of religious character.

One of their quarterly meetings, probably the second, was held in Carlisle. The meeting-house was small, and on the Sabbath the congregation was large. They were, therefore, compelled to remove the meeting to an adjoining

grove. The presiding elder, Mr. Wilson, was a man of very neat personal appearance; and, moreover, wore a silk morning gown. He opened the religious services in the place specified, and before he had closed, such were the effects produced on the congregation that many fell to the ground in every direction, like men in battle: numbers also professed conversion; and crowds went away wondering what these things could mean.

Methodism was weak and small in Carlisle in those days, and was treated with no little contempt. Dickinson College was there, and at that time was under Calvinistic influence. Little did Rev. R. R. Roberts then think that the day would roll round so rapidly when the College itself would pass into the hands of the Methodists, and such large and flourishing Methodist societies would be raised up in Carlisle and the surrounding country.

The Rev. John Wall preceded him on the circuit, but had declined traveling, in consequence of the inconveniences of the itinerant life, and the want of family support, as he had a wife and children. After his resignation, he established a powder mill in Shippensburg. This, however, was soon blown up. Mr. Wall himself was seriously injured, but at length he recovered from the effects. Mrs. Wall, being of a very resolute disposition, was more than willing to undergo the privations and difficulties of an itinerant life, and frequently urged her husband to persevere. When this disaster befell them, she very earnestly exhorted Mr. and Mrs. Roberts to adhere to the course which they had commenced. Her pious advice had an excellent effect on the mind of Mrs. Roberts, fully reconciling her to her lot. Indeed, the event was not without its influence on Mr. Roberts himself. Mr. Wall was an excellent man, of good mental qualities, lived a pious and useful life, and died in great peace in Cincinnati, in 1841. His amiable wife still survives, a pattern of piety, urging

too, when opportunity offers, every itinerant preacher to continue in his sacred and important work, forgetting not to mention as a reason the calamities occasioned by the explosion of her husband's powder mill after abandoning the itinerant field of labor.

The great diffidence of Mr. Roberts, and the low estimate he put on his own talents, still continued to give him more or less uneasiness, though not so much as formerly. Of this we have an instance. Little York was a Sabbath appointment, and such was the great estimation in which he was there held, after he had preached a few times, that crowds went constantly to hear him. The Methodist society was small, and Methodism itself was held in no very high repute at that time; still large congregations attended the ministry of Mr. Roberts, the most intelligent persons in the town and vicinity being especially delighted with his pulpit performances, and always attending when he preached. In the place of encouraging, this rather intimidated the backwoods preacher. He could, at that time, speak with tolerable confidence to a small assembly, composed of persons of common acquirements; but the presence of crowds, and among them the most educated and best informed, was very much in his way. Such was the effect on his mind, one Sabbath on witnessing the large numbers that were hastening to the church where he was about to preach, that he even retired to the commons. There he walked to and fro in pensive sadness, and concluded he had better not go to the church until the hour of preaching was over, or nearly so, in hope that the congregation would disperse, or that some other preacher, who might happen to be present, would commence the exercises, and thus he would be released from the performance of a duty to which, under the circumstances, he considered himself inadequate. After delaying, as he supposed, a sufficient length of time to be relieved from the cross which bore on him so severely,

he entered the church, and found it well filled with expectant hearers, and no one present who had undertaken to officiate. He ascended the pulpit, gave out his hymn, sang and prayed. While the congregation were singing the second hymn, he selected his text, and afterward commenced without either apology or explanation. On this occasion, he had unusual liberty, and preached greatly to the edification and delight of his audience. His performance was spoken of with enthusiasm by the elite of the town, and served as a new reason for the increase of his congregation in future. His unaffected modesty won the hearts of his hearers; his solid good sense instructed the most intelligent; and the deep vein of piety and the holy unction which imbued his discourse, became wine and fat things to the religious part of his audience. In short, he was then, though in his incipient year, a popular preacher in the best sense of the word.

His pecuniary resources were small in those days. As to the few wants of his wife, they were supplied partly by the kindness of her mother, with whom she lived, and partly by her own industry. Having lost both his horses, and having no money to purchase another, he was somewhat perplexed to know what to do in this respect. He, however, borrowed one from a friend for present use; and by the kindness of the members of the Church, and some persons who were not members, a horse was purchased and nearly paid for, so that he was enabled to continue in his good work. Indeed, the gift of a horse was indispensably necessary. He could not possibly walk around so large a circuit in all kinds of weather, and punctually meet his appointments. He had no present supplies on which to depend. His real estate at Shenango, consisting of about four hundred acres of land, a few of which were cleared, and also a log cabin, would not sell at all, or at most would not bring one hundred dollars, in cash payments. Even when

a tract of three hundred acres was sold in 1832, twenty-five or thirty of which were cleared, together with a mill that had been erected on it, it brought only two dollars per acre. At this low price it was purchased by John and Findlay Stevenson, and Lewis Lindsay. Had Mr. Roberts gone in debt for a horse, it would have been without the remotest prospect of making payment, as the utmost he could expect from his circuit was no more than a most limited subsistence, by the most parsimonious mode of living, aided also by the great economy and unsurpassed industry of his wife, and moreover favored with no more of a family than themselves. Money, it is scarcely necessary to state, was not the object he had in view in becoming an itinerant preacher, or he never would have been one. Had this been his aim, he would doubtless have continued on his farm; for there he had the prospect of independence and competency, and perhaps wealth. The pioneer itinerant preachers were men that the world is much indebted to. Those of the present generation are placed in more favored circumstances. But it requires still, and always will require much self-sacrifice to be an itinerant Methodist minister. The cross has not yet ceased, and it never can cease until the itinerant system is broken to pieces, it being utterly incapable of adaptation to the worldly and the selfish in its genuine form. Indeed those who love the world, and the things of the world, would never form such a scheme; neither would they continue any length of time under its operations.

At the close of the conference year, Rev. R. R. Roberts' colleague went to conference, while he remained on the circuit, filling the appointments, until he received information of his future field of labor.

In the spring of 1803, he was stationed on Montgomery circuit, Maryland. His colleague was Peter B. Davis, who was also in charge. He left his wife with her mother in York, and traveled one round on the circuit, in order to

ascertain where he could get a home for her. At this time there were no parsonages on the circuits, and a preacher found it necessary to go at least one round before he could determine where it would be best to settle temporarily his family. He found a place for her in Clarksburg, near Sugar Loaf Mountain, at which he boarded her during the year. The presiding elder was Daniel Hitt. Many of the societies were large. Preaching and meeting classes occupied the day-time; and as there were many colored societies that could not attend a place of worship during the day, the ministers had to preach for them at night, and meet their classes also. This gave them an abundance of work, especially as they had appointments nearly every day in the week. At the end of six months, his colleague, Mr. Davis, for some cause, was removed to another circuit—a custom very common in those days, but of rare occurrence at present. These transfers were frequently made in order to secure, at certain points, the services of those who were ordained to administer the sacraments; for the same proportion of preachers was not then ordained as now. The place of Mr. Davis was supplied by Joseph Hays. The charge then devolved on Mr. Roberts, which, of course, increased his labors.

Previously to this time, Rev. Nicholas Snethen, a man of superior preaching abilities, had been traveling with Bishop Asbury in the west, and had had an opportunity of attending several camp meetings in the course of the journey. He became fully convinced that they might be introduced, with great advantage, east of the mountains. Accordingly, on his return he determined to have one near Baltimore, where he was then stationed. Joshua Wells was in charge and was opposed to the measure, but finally yielded so far as to permit Mr. Snethen and his other colleague, Samuel Coats, to do as they pleased, he himself, however, standing entirely aloof from it. His reason for

this course, probably, was, that he considered the camp meeting as an experiment not yet fully tested, and was therefore unwilling to commit himself and the Church with an undertaking, which, to them, at that time, was of doubtful character. Mr. Snethen heard of Mr. Roberts as being a very promising young preacher, and in a letter requested him to announce the meeting on his circuit, and also to come himself and assist on the occasion. This was in the fall, or toward the end of summer, before Mr. Davis had been transferred to the other circuit, and of course while he was in charge. Mr. Roberts began to give out the camp meeting appointment as he traveled around the circuit. He at length, however, met his colleague, Mr. Davis, who was by no means favorable to his mode of proceeding, as the meeting was unauthorized by the Discipline, and was of doubtful utility, or at least of a not fully tried character. His colleague stated that he thought he ought to have consulted with him before making the announcement, and should have had his concurrence and permission, especially as he was the preacher in charge. He replied that he had published the meeting at the request of a regular Methodist preacher, and that he did not suppose there was any impropriety in it, adding that he had purposed to attend himself. After some free and pleasant conversation on the subject, Mr. Davis dropped his opposition, and finally agreed to go to the meeting in company with Mr. Roberts, and judge for himself.

This was probably the introduction of camp meetings east of the mountains, and it was not to be expected that all would cordially unite with the zealous undertakers of them at once. Mr. Roberts and his colleague, however, according to agreement, went to the meeting. At the time of their arrival there, the horn was just being blown as a signal for preaching at the pulpit or stand. The sound of this instrument, being associated in his mind with boating

and other common uses, was rather repulsive, and was not calculated to promote feelings of devotion. But when he saw Mr. Snethen in the stand, which was, withal, a very rough one, he was highly pleased, as the scene then presented the appearance of religious service, though to him the arrangement of the tents, and so on, had little connection with the exercises of religion, judging by former associations. Mr. Snethen preached an able sermon from, "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but spiritual," &c. The effect was powerful. Sinners began to fall in every direction. Mr. Roberts, however, became very much troubled in his mind while witnessing the scene. He had joined the Methodists, and become a minister among them, but could not approve of all their proceedings. For two days he was sad and dejected, and knew not what to do. But on retiring to the woods, and engaging earnestly in secret prayer, his mind was relieved, and he was subsequently able to take part in the services.

During the course of this and the previous year, he first became acquainted with the German Methodists, then called Otterbeins. Mr. Otterbein was a German divine of considerable talents and piety, of the German Reformed Church. He assisted at the ordination of Bishop Asbury. The German Methodists did not then constitute a separate Church, but all often met together for worship. Mr. Roberts went to their meetings very frequently, and preached for them. They also attended our meetings, and manifested great friendliness. On this point, Bishop Roberts, in the brief journal before referred to, written from his mouth by President Simpson, says, "They were very friendly to us. They came to our meetings, and we attended theirs. We ought to have begun systematically among the Germans then." Some of their ministers applied for admission into the traveling ministry; but, having families, they were rejected, as the sum necessary to support them would, of

course, be greater than that required for single men. This miserable policy so far infested the Church as to lead to the rejection of several able ministers; while most of those who became married, located, in consequence of the want of family support. This was not, however, strictly the fault of the people. It resulted from the *teachings* and *practice* of a few influential preachers, the people being apt scholars under them. By it, as already intimated, many married men of great ministerial worth were actually *shut out* of the field to which God had clearly called them; and many others were *excluded* from it after they had entered. To this day, the bad effects of this anti-scriptural policy remain, and two generations will not cure the evil. By these means, and some other improvident steps, the German Methodists were alienated from the Methodist Episcopal Church, which unquestionably has been a great hindrance to the work of God among the Germans, even down to the present time. Had the German Methodists of that day been incorporated into the Methodist Episcopal Church as a separate conference, or in some other form, the cause of Christianity among all the Protestant Germans of the United States would have been much promoted, and the best results would have followed. The recent German organization in the Methodist Episcopal Church, however, connected, as it is, with the periodical press and religious books, promises great usefulness in behalf of the German population. And were all the Methodist Germans, whether among the United Brethren, or the Evangelical Association, or Otterbeins, now harmoniously marshaled under the Methodist Episcopal Church, a far greater amount of good would be done than is being accomplished by separate organizations. We fear, however, that this desirable state of things will not soon be brought about; and yet we believe that independent bodies of Methodists are unnecessary. No matter who they are,

or in whatever form they exist, so long as they are without the pale of the Methodist Episcopal Church, they are uncalled for.

While Rev. R. R. Roberts was on this circuit, and was in his second or third round, three or four young ladies experienced religion, and came prepared, at one of his appointments, to join the Church. Having had no special instructions from his colleague, Mr. Davis, to receive members, he advised them to wait till he came round. Such was his retiring disposition and his great aversion to assume any power which did not belong to him, as well as his extraordinary timidity in exercising even the power which he believed himself legitimately to possess, that on this occasion he actually declined doing what is the regular business of every junior preacher in the absence of his senior. Before, however, his colleague came round a Baptist minister had prevailed on them to be immersed, and thus taken them into his Church. This led to some difficulties, and finally to a controversy between the Baptist minister and Mr. Davis, in which both sides, as usual, claimed the victory. Indeed, it was the custom of Baptist ministers, very generally, to be on the look out for Methodist converts, in order to persuade them that baptism by immersion alone is valid, and by this means gain accessions to their Church. They visited them in private and preached to them in public, and very often manifested unseemly haste to have them immersed. We have known of weak minded persons, after a whole evening's fire-side catechising, hurried to the adjoining stream, between 10 and 12 o'clock at night, to be immersed, and immediately taken into the Church, lest their sober reflections in the morning, or a few days afterward, would prevent them from being Baptists. Those acquainted with the religious history of the last fifty years, especially its denominational features, can easily call to mind innumerable cases of this description. In fact those

measures became the settled policy of the Baptist Church, and they considered themselves doing eminent service to the cause of true Christianity, when by such exceptionable means they could transfer Methodist converts into their own denomination. They have ever laid in complaints about Methodists taking unconverted persons into their Church; nevertheless, when these same unconverted persons, (and regarded as such by Methodists themselves, having, as the Discipline expresses it, "The form of godliness, and seeking the power,") happened to become candidates for immersion in the Baptist Church, all at once they "had a hope," were regenerated, and entitled to the character of good Christians. Then the Methodist *seeker* became, as by magical transformation, a believer. The truth is, that those whom the Methodists consider as awakened penitents or seekers of religion, the Baptists too often regard as having the experience of Christians. Many thousands of Methodist converts have been, by this means, taken into the Baptist Churches. But the fruit of the unscriptural stress they lay on baptism has been disastrous to themselves. It has generated Campbellism, and several other unsound systems; and it is now working and ever will work mischief in the Baptist Churches. While, however, we make these assertions, we are free to admit that the Baptists are a valuable branch of the Church of Christ; but we tell them in honesty and candor that the errors we have mentioned, are mischievous to their very well being. Some improvement for the better has been made within the last few years; but there is still need of much more in some of them.

At the last quarterly meeting held on Montgomery circuit, they were favored with the labors of Rev. Nicholas Snethen. The congregations were large, and religious services had to be held in the open air. Many were converted, and a revival began to spread in different directions through the circuit.

The Baltimore conference sat this year, 1804, at Alexandria, District of Columbia, in the month of April, Dr. Coke attending and aiding Bishop Asbury. Mr. Roberts was admitted into full connection, having filled his two years of probation with great usefulness. Even then his ministerial qualifications attracted notice. When his case came before the conference for election to deacons' orders, and for full admission into the traveling connection, Bishop Asbury, in a tone of pleasantry, on the name of Robert R. Roberts being called, inquired concerning "mountain headed Roberts, not city Roberts." By city Roberts was meant, another preacher of the same name. It seems, too, that the distinctive appellation given above, had reference to the part of the country from which Rev. R. R. Roberts came, as he was *from* the mountains or *over* the mountains. Rev. James Smith, his former colleague, observed in reply, that the moral character of Robert R. Roberts was unblemished, and his head was a complete magazine. He was consequently ordained deacon. This was performed by the Rev. Francis Asbury, at the conference already mentioned, in Alexandria, District of Columbia, on the twenty-eighth day of April, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and four. We give on the annexed page a fac simile of his parchment, containing the testimonial of his ordination as deacon in the Methodist Episcopal Church, signed, of course, by Bishop Asbury, which we doubt not our readers will be pleased to see. A slight change of one expression in the parchment used when he was ordained, was made sometime between the year 1832 and 1836. The clause, "A man whom I judge to be well qualified for that work: and do hereby recommend him," was changed for the following: "A man who, in the judgment of the ——— conference, is well qualified for that work: and he is hereby recommended." The change was justly made to correspond with the fact of the case, namely: that the

conference of which the person becomes a member, has always been the judge in regard to the qualifications of deacons, and, of course, it does not seem proper for the Bishops, in giving letters of ordination, to state that *they judge*, when it is the annual conference that judges: moreover the Bishop ought not to be made responsible for an act in which others are the actors.

A brief outline of the various steps by which a Methodist preacher is licensed to preach, received on probation, and admitted into the ministry, may be acceptable to the reader in this place, connected, as it is, with the ordination of Rev. R. R. Roberts.

The *social meetings* in the Methodist Episcopal Church, such as class meetings, love feasts and prayer meetings, are admirably calculated to exercise and develop the gifts and graces of Church members. Here, they are called upon or are permitted to relate their Christian experience. They are all, too, more or less, called upon to exercise their gifts in extemporaneous prayer. In these exercises, the discovery will be soon made whether any have gifts capable of rendering them a benefit to others. In these exercises, too, experienced Church members and ministers will be enabled to observe the beginnings, or mark the indications of those gifts which point out, either certainly or probably, the future minister.

Then there is the office of *class-leader*. The class-leaders are chosen from among the most gifted of the private members, who, in the exercise of their gifts and graces, as members, give promise of usefulness. In this office, there is room for the development of ministerial gifts. Giving out the hymns, speaking to the members and encouraging them, and delivering short exhortatory addresses at the commencement and conclusion of the meeting, furnish opportunities for the unfolding of talent on the part of the leader, and the ability of judging on the part of the mem-

KNOW all Men by these Presents, That I Francis Asbury, one of the Bishops of the Methodist-Episcopal Church, in America, under the protection of ALMIGHTY GOD, and with a single eye to his glory, by the Imposition of my Hands, and Prayer, have this day set apart *Robert A. Roberts* for the office of a DEACON in the said Methodist-Episcopal Church; a Man whom I judge to be well qualified for that work: and do hereby recommend him to all whom it may concern, as a proper Person to administer the ordinance of Baptism, Marriage, and the Burial of the Dead, in the absence of an Elder, and to feed the Flock of Christ, so long as his Spirit and Practice are such as become the Gospel of Christ, and he continueth to hold fast the form of sound words, according to the established Doctrines of the Gospel.

In Testimony whereof, I have herewith set my Hand and Seal, this *20th* Day of *April* in the Year of our Lord, One Thousand Eight Hundred and *four*.

Conference in }
From *Widdow*
Beauchamps }



bers, who become witnesses to the Church as to whether the individual gives promise of ministerial capabilities or not. Hence, the Church is prepared to admit to the office of exhorter those who are qualified for it.

Of the office of *exhorter* in our Church, we would next make mention. The preacher in pastoral charge of circuits has the power of granting licenses to exhort. But the consent of the leaders' meeting or of the class the candidate is a member of must first be obtained; and, moreover, the license must be renewed annually. Here is a fine field of exercise for the future preacher, and one that answers most admirably to call forth the development of gifts and graces.

After this, the office of *local preacher* gives abundant opportunity for testing ministerial talents. The society of which the person is a member, or the leaders' meeting, must first recommend him. Then the quarterly conference, composed of the presiding elder, the traveling and local preachers, the stewards, exhorters and leaders of the circuit, by a majority of votes, confer the license, after due examination of the candidate in doctrine, discipline and Christian experience. In this relation the young preacher has good opportunities to satisfy himself, while the Church can test his true value in regard to ministerial qualifications.

All preachers before they can be admitted on trial in an annual conference, must be *recommended* by the quarterly conference of their respective circuits. They are examined on doctrine and discipline; and it is particularly inquired by the quarterly conference, (See Discipline, p. 48.)

1. Has he grace?
2. Has he gifts?
3. Has God given him fruit for his labor?
4. Will he in the judgment of charity be a useful minister?

Next his case comes before the annual conference, where

he is fully represented, and is received or rejected by a majority of votes. If received he is employed as a probationer for two years in the work of the ministry, and has a course of study prescribed; and then, at the expiration of this time, if he is not likely to make a useful preacher, he is rejected. The following searching questions are proposed by the President, which must be satisfactorily answered before the conference: "Have you faith in Christ? Are you going on to perfection? Do you expect to be made perfect in love in this life? Are you groaning after it? Are you resolved to devote yourself wholly to God and his work? Do you know the rules of society?—of the bands? Do you keep them? Do you constantly attend the sacrament? Have you read the form of Discipline? Are you willing to conform to it? Have you considered the rules of a preacher, especially the first, tenth and twelfth? Will you keep them for conscience' sake? Are you determined to employ all your time in the work of God? Will you endeavor not to speak too long or too loud? Will you diligently instruct the children in every place? Will you visit from house to house? Will you recommend fasting, or abstinence, both by precept and example? Are you in debt?" The election of the conference admits him to full membership, and election and ordination to the office of deacon. The ordination, for the right performance of which a form is given in the Discipline, solemnly requires profession of faith, an inward call by the Holy Ghost, and a promise to do the work of a minister of Christ.

Such is a brief outline of the process of trial and examination which the Methodist Episcopal Church pursues in regard to the ministry. We need not say that it is safe and efficient; and, if tested by the Bible, we are persuaded that no other Church will be found to approach nearer Scriptural principles and practice in this matter than she. And

without instituting invidious comparisons, we remark that she has no cause to alter her plan of procedure in hope of embracing a better one.

Mr. Roberts passed through all the gradations mentioned above with entire satisfaction to the Church, and was considered among the most promising ministers of his time.

In 1804 he was stationed on Frederick circuit, Maryland, embracing within its bounds the place of his birth. But as the General conference commenced the following week in Baltimore, he purposed to attend. He had no seat, none being members but elders. He went as a spectator, and, with the other spectators, was permitted to sit in the gallery a part of the time. At this conference the fathers of Methodism, and many of the elder brethren, Coke, Asbury, Whatcoat, Walters, Garretson, the Lees, Cooper, Willis, G. Roberts, &c., were present. The conference resolved to *review* and *revise* the entire book of Discipline. The whole was consequently read and passed by a vote of the conference. When they came to the eighth article of religion, a brother rose up and moved to strike out the word "*preventing*," and insert in its place the word "*assisting*." Dr. Coke waited impatiently for the member to finish his argument in favor of the alteration, and the instant he had done the Doctor was on his feet, and at the top of his voice exclaimed, "Where am I? In a Methodist conference? I thought so; but have we turned Pelagians? Do we think we can get along in our natural depravity with a little *assistance*, without *preventing grace*? But perhaps our brother has mistaken the meaning of the word *preventing*, and taken it in the common acceptation of *hindering*?" He then proceeded to remark that the proposed amendment would mar—yea, ruin the article, and accommodate it to the views of every Pelagian. The article, as it now stands, first asserts the utter inability of man to do any thing toward his personal salvation: "*He can-*

not," &c.; and, secondly, it asserts the grace of God, by Christ, as coming in *before*. For the word *prevent* is derived from *pre*, *before*, and *venio*, *I come*. He concluded his remarks by observing, "Brethren, do not change that word. I would go to the stake—yes, to the stake, for that word, as soon as for any word in the Bible."

There was considerable discussion on numerous other topics, which called forth a diversity of argumentation and a variety of feeling. Mr. Roberts, at this early age of his ministry, and from his want of acquaintance with ecclesiastical bodies, was not very well pleased on the whole, especially as after two days all spectators were excluded, he in common with the rest.

When conferences assemble and discuss a variety of subjects, of course a variety of opinions must exist; and there is, therefore, great need of watchfulness and prayer. Our pious fore-fathers, in conducting the business of both General and annual conferences, adopted the following excellent regulations and advices, to which all preachers would do well to take heed:

"It is desired that all things be considered on these occasions as in the immediate presence of God: that every person speak freely whatever is in his heart.

"*Quest.* 1. How may we best improve our time at the conferences?

"*Answ.* 1. While we are conversing, let us have an especial care to set God always before us.

"2. In the intermediate hours, let us redeem all the time we can for private exercises.

"3. Therein let us give ourselves to prayer for one another, and for a blessing on our labor."

Preachers, without any real wrong temper, may not be aware that the *appearance* of it, and even the free expression of different views, often produce unfavorable impressions on the minds of spectators; and therefore the kindest

feelings and the most respectful language ought to be employed on all such occasions. On the other hand, spectators ought to consider that a manly tone of voice may be used, a prompt and ready reply adopted, and all the force of strong argument brought forward during an animated debate, and yet the best Christian temper may be mutually enjoyed and exercised. Ministers, on these occasions, it should be borne in mind, are not properly engaged in religious exercises, and, of course, a different tone and manner, but dignified and sober, may be allowed them. Mr. Roberts, like many others, had an idea that debates should be conducted in precisely the same mode as preaching and praying. In attending the General conference he found this was not done, and hence his unpleasant feelings.

The plans of closed and open doors have both their advocates. With closed doors, some of the business of annual conferences ought to be done. Such, however, are the prejudices and views of many, that open doors are more desired, and, therefore, of late years, conferences have generally followed this plan, except in the examination of character.

CHAPTER VI.

CONTINUANCE IN THE ITINERANCY.

As we remarked in the last chapter, he received his appointment in 1804, on Frederick circuit, Maryland. It embraced Frederick county, part of Baltimore county, and the greater part of Washington county. James Smith was his colleague, D. Hitt his presiding elder, and he himself had charge of the circuit.

He left his wife at the place where she resided the previous year, and went one round on his circuit. While on this round, he got her a residence for the year, at the house

of Lewis Browning, in an upper room, with the privilege of cooking in the kitchen. As there was no provision on circuits in those days for families, it was necessary, as before remarked, to go around the circuit, in order to ascertain where a temporary resting place could be found. Neither the expense of moderate boarding, nor of renting a house, could be defrayed at this time by Mr. Roberts. He was, therefore, compelled to observe the most rigid economy. The plan just mentioned was the only one he could fall on to meet the current expenses of his family, small as they were. Mrs. Roberts, by her own industry, and great economy, was very little expense to the Church. Indeed, she may be said to have supported herself; and in no other way could her husband have continued in the itinerant ranks.

On his first or second round, he preached within two hundred yards of the spot where he was born. The following day he visited an aunt, who was old, and resided about a mile distant. She had heard nothing of his becoming a Methodist preacher, and knew not where he was. He went to her house, as a stranger, and on entering she inquired where he was from, and also what was his name. On his answering her questions, she arose from her seat, kindly welcomed him, and observed, "I am the person who put the first clothing on you." As soon, however, as she learned that he was a Methodist preacher, she became much displeased, as she was High Church in her principles. She questioned him concerning the character of his excellent father, and insisted that he was truly religious before he became acquainted with the Methodists. She said she did not like "turn-coats." To these and many other similar remarks made by his good aunt, he replied in his own mild way, that he never had had a coat until he got among the Methodists. After considerable conversation, which on her part at first was spirited and high-toned, she softened down into affec-

tionate regard for her long absent nephew, and proposed that he would pray with her, to which he readily agreed. He continued his friendly visits, whenever he could, which were cordially received by his aunt, and doubtless were blessed to her spiritual comfort.

On this circuit, the followers of Otterbein were very numerous. They were exceedingly kind to Mr. Roberts, opened their houses for him to preach in, and entertained him cordially. At a place called Middletown, he preached several times in their meeting-house. They were a very devoted people, and had good meetings. As they were not then organized into a Church, he was desirous that they should be, and thought they had better join the Methodist Episcopal Church. He conversed with them on the subject, and they appeared willing so to do. On his next round, he proposed to admit such as wished to unite; when about thirty acted on his proposition. Among the number were three preachers. This step gave offense to some of their friends, and the result was, that several of those who had joined withdrew shortly afterward, and among them two of the preachers. The other preacher, John Everhart, remained in the Methodist Episcopal Church. He had been a soldier in the Revolution under Washington. One day in battle, his horse was shot under him, and he was taken prisoner. In moving along, he got separated from those who had charge of him. While on his way he found a pistol, which he secreted under his coat. A British horseman happened to ride slowly along without seeing him. Mr. Everhart stepped up to him, presented the pistol to his breast, and told him he was his prisoner. The horseman surrendered and dismounted. Mr. Everhart took the horse, dismissed his prisoner, mounted the steed himself, rode off in a circuitous route and joined his own troops. At his conversion, he became a devoted Christian, and subsequently a useful minister.

On this circuit, Harper's Ferry was included in his list of appointments, but no congregation would convene there. During the two or three first rounds, Rev. R. R. Roberts punctually attended this place, but did not preach, for the reason just assigned. The good lady at whose house he staid, and who was also a devoted Christian, observed to him, "Brother Roberts, I want to hear you preach." He responded, that he was not only willing, but anxious so to do, and all that prevented him was the want of a congregation. At that time she said no more, and the conversation changed. But the pious sister was too zealous to settle down in inactivity. She formed the plan of having a large quilting on hand at the time of his next visit. Accordingly, she made the preparations, and secured the attendance of her female neighbors, by which means a large collection of persons was brought together. Whether she advised them of her design we cannot say. It is probable she did, as no dissatisfaction was manifested at the result. Or it might be that she left the disclosure of her design to the occasion. At any rate, Mr. Roberts happened to get there early in the day. He found the house was filled with women, closely engaged in making two quilts. The good lady having thus succeeded in collecting a respectable congregation, the quilts, on the arrival of the preacher, were lifted up, and the room adjusted so as to seat all the guests. Mr. Roberts then preached to them; and they were so well pleased with his discourse, that they determined to become constant hearers. Each, at home, expatiated on the rare qualities of the preacher who officiated on this novel occasion. The next appointment was announced ere the quilting closed which was well remembered by the good ladies, and where forgetfulness was suspected, the sister at whose house the quilting and preaching were united, was not backward to bestir or keep alive memory. As might be expected, Mr. Roberts and his coming appointment, became the principal topic of

table talk in the several houses of the neighborhood; and when the day and hour arrived, the curiosity of numbers was raised to hear the quilting-room preacher. After this, even until he left the circuit, there was never again any lack of a congregation, either at one of his regular appointments or on a special occasion.

Early in the fall, Mrs. Roberts' mother died. Mr. and Mrs. Roberts visited her shortly after she was taken sick. Mrs. Roberts remained sometime, administering to her necessities.

Late in the fall of 1804, or rather in the early part of winter, he and his wife resolved to visit their relatives at Shenango. They traveled on horse-back, carrying their provisions for the journey in their saddle-bags, with such utensils as would enable them to cook for themselves when necessary. They also took two blankets to protect themselves from cold, in case they should have to encamp in the woods during the night. A lady traveled along with them to Somerset. One evening they put up at a "waste cabin," and spent the night there, having procured some hay for their horses. Another night they staid at a most miserable cabin, cooked their own victuals, and made their bed for the night, on a heap of unwinnowed flax-seed, using their own bed-clothes. After paying a short visit to their relatives, Mr. Roberts left his wife with them, and returned to his circuit. Mrs. Roberts remained at Shenango till the sitting of the Baltimore conference in the following April.

This economical way of traveling was the only one which they could adopt. They had very little property of their own, and that little was not available for the present use, and moreover they received a very small remuneration on their circuit. Reasons of economy, too, influenced them more or less, in Mrs. Roberts' staying with their relatives during the winter and spring. As they had a house of their own, poor though it was, on their land at Shenango, it was

not marvelous, that after being three years without a regular residence, sometimes boarding with other persons, and sometimes dwelling in the upper room of a house occupied by a different family; and then, even the small expense thus incurred not being met without the rigid economy of traveling in the way just mentioned—we say it was not marvelous that any shelter, even their old cabin, should prove a desirable retreat for them. Such was the modesty and independence of Rev. R. R. Roberts that he would say nothing to any person in regard to want, whatever might be his sufferings. Mrs. Roberts, likewise, would much rather work for herself, and live on the smallest allowance, than make known their circumstances. But what could she do when she was constantly among strangers? She could not carry with her a loom and wheel, and flax and wool; neither could she cultivate a garden; nor adopt any such regulations. To dwell in her *own* cabin, though but twelve feet square, and to have all the privileges connected with house-keeping on a farm, though but partially cultivated, and, moreover, to be in the possession of independence—to reside where she was not in the way of others, had attractions to both of them which few can well appreciate who have not been in similar circumstances.

After leaving his wife at Shenango to spend the winter there, Mr. Roberts, as already stated, returned to his circuit and remained till conference, which was in April, 1805, serving the people of his charge with great fidelity, and very much to their satisfaction and profit. The conference sat in Winchester, Virginia. He received his appointment to Shenango circuit, which then embraced Butler and Beaver counties, Pennsylvania, and extended into Ohio as far as Yellow Creek, where Wellsville now stands, and contained several appointments in the Western Reserve. It did not, however, embrace that part of Mercer county where his land was located, or, indeed, any part

thereof. The nearest point to his home was between twenty and thirty miles distant.

At this time there was no Methodist preaching in Pittsburg; and at the request of Mr. Wrenshall and others, he agreed to serve them. Having no fixed place to hold meeting in, he preached in the old court-house. Some rude persons, however, commenced dancing up stairs, which so annoyed the congregation that he had to desist. He then went to Mr. Wrenshall's back yard. There also the congregation was disturbed by the same rude persons throwing apples and sticks at the preacher. Nevertheless he continued his labors among them, regulating the society, and making a favorable impression on the public by his able ministrations, his kind manner, and dignified demeanor.

At this time there was great excitement among the Presbyterians, in consequence of the *falling*, as it was then generally called. Many, under the word, and in other religious meetings, fell prostrate on the ground, and cried to God for mercy. This was very much opposed by the Seceders and Unionists, which called forth considerable controversy. The Presbyterians themselves were greatly divided on the subject; some condemning the practice, and others heartily defending and maintaining it, while many preferred remaining silent.

Traveling on Slippery Rock one day, Mr. Roberts stopped to get his horse fed. The gentleman of the house was not at home. The lady and her daughter supposed Mr. Roberts, from his dress, to be a minister, and were very desirous to know whether he was a Seceder or Presbyterian. They asked several questions in order to ascertain his opinion about the matter just referred to, and as he expressed himself favorably, they took it for granted that he was a Presbyterian. During the conversation, they said some ill-natured things about the Methodists, but he let them

pass without any opposing remarks. After dinner, when he was about to leave, the lady requested him to stay, and on the following day go to the church, as Mr. Woods, their preacher, would be very glad to see him. He told her that he could not go, as he had an appointment himself. She then wished to know if he was seeking a call from some congregation. He replied that he already had congregations. At which she remarked she had never heard of one of his name having a congregation in that part of the country. He informed her that the people of his charge embraced more citizens than the charge of any other minister in that region. She then inquired where it was. He answered her by giving in detail a list of all the appointments on his circuit, at which she expressed great surprise. He then remarked that he was one of those people to whom she was not very friendly. "Not a Methodist!" she exclaimed, raising her hands in surprise. "Yes," he replied. "Well," she added, "no person could have taken you for one." After some further conversation, the lady invited him to call again. They parted good friends; and he called frequently afterward, she always treating him with great kindness.

At the close of the second quarterly meeting, he was transferred to Erie circuit by his presiding elder, Rev. James Hunter, for his own accommodation, as his family lived within its bounds. He had commenced building a mill; and he thought it required more of his superintendence than he could give while attending to the discharge of the duties of the Shenango circuit. The reason why he commenced this building was, that he had but little support from the Church, and he thought his family could be maintained by the proceeds of the mill, and thus he would be relieved from anxiety on that account. The spare time he had while on his circuit was employed in the hard work of erecting the mill. And it is not improbable that he may

have been led to spend more time in this undertaking than the interests of the Church would fully allow. At least some were pleased to think so, and his conduct called forth the remark from a zealous person who, nevertheless, highly prized Mr. Roberts' talents and usefulness: "It would be well for the people if his wife were dead, and the mill swept down the river." The observation, as far as it concerned Mrs. Roberts, was an unchristian one, as she was always opposed to the erection of the mill. It was her ardent desire, not only then, but also before and after, that her husband should spend his whole time in discharging his duties to the Church. Her wants were few, and she could supply them herself, and she was willing to use all possible economy and industry, so that he would not be impeded by her in his ministerial career. Besides, the zealous brother who made the remark may have been, and we think was, one of those who, after enjoying Church privileges for many years, can thank God that their membership never cost them six cents.

Bishop Roberts' own comment on this subject is of great value. It was given in 1842, thirty-seven years after the occurrence just mentioned. He says, "I would here advise all preachers never to quit the work of the Lord to serve tables. However fair their prospects of making money may be, they are frequently delusive, and such ministers are losers in the end. As I had but little support from quarterage, I thought my family could be maintained by a mill, and I should be better able to travel without anxiety. But it was not so: it embarrassed my mind, and took up my attention; and, though for a while it did well, it eventually proved a loss." On these few remarks of the good Bishop, we will hazard a few thoughts.

1. It is the duty of Church members to provide for the support of ministers and their families, in the style of medium life, with neither poverty or riches. Not in

poverty, or the ministry will sink into contempt and uselessness. Not in riches, as this holds out a strong bait to induce worldly men to enter the sacred office, and tends to corrupt them. The prayer of Agur comprises the proper standard for ministerial support: "Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me; lest I be full and deny thee, and say, who is the Lord? or lest I be poor and steal, and take the name of my God in vain," Prov. xxx, 8, 9. A ministry, unaccompanied with the advantages of matrimonial life, is the most inefficient, corrupt and expensive in the world. As far as this obtained formerly in the Methodist Episcopal Church, it tended to produce an inexperienced and unqualified body of ministers, though neither corrupt nor expensive. In the Church of Rome, however, corruption in morals and expense have attended the celibacy all along. Their clergy have for centuries been the most expensive in the world. Not having wives to superintend their concerns, and generally keeping house, the demands of their families, composed of relatives, and mostly a house-keeper, who sustains various relations to the clergyman, become enormous. All the ecclesiastical establishments in Europe, England not excepted, were adapted to a celibate clergy. A few influential men, too, in the Methodist Episcopal Church of great worth, the fathers of the Church, countenanced the plan of ministerial celibacy, thinking it would furnish cheap pastors; and by this means in some conferences the preachers were inefficient, being young, inexperienced men, ministers of families not entering the itinerant ranks, and those of families who had already entered, abandoning their field of labor to provide for their families.

2. Ministers ought not to devote themselves to worldly matters, but solely to the work of the ministry. This is indispensable. Whatever they may suffer in the work, they are likely to suffer more by leaving it, if efficient

workmen. After an experience of twenty-five years, during which we have had many opportunities of observation, the three following statements are, to our own mind, supported by the facts in the case.

Those who have made the ministry their great work; and have continued in it, have, with economy and difficulty, been enabled to support their families; and moreover their families have fared better, taking all things into consideration, than they would if they had left the ministry; and also better than the families of those who actually did leave for worldly gain and family convenience.

Those who have left the work of the ministry, for family convenience, have suffered more, spiritually, mentally and temporally, than those who continued therein under similar circumstances. Their families too fared worse in the end. And they have besides, had trials, poverty and sorrows, to which those have been strangers who continued doing the work of the Lord.

Those who have declined supporting the ministry are no richer; and those who have done their duty in this respect are no poorer, but the contrary.

We have seen these three statements verified by a multitude of facts, which could be adduced, had we sufficient space in this volume.

3. The foregoing remarks are sustained by the consideration, that worldly prosperity will rarely succeed dereliction of duty. Mr. Roberts built his mill, probably by appropriating time to the purpose that ought to have been spent in the ministry. The results were, 1st. He was perplexed and harassed in mind. 2d. His mill never refunded the money spent in building it.

Happy would it be for the ministers and members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, were due attention paid to these important things. The sad effects of the errors we have mentioned, remain in our midst to the present time.

They have in part been done away; while in part they still remain. Perhaps a generation or two will apply a remedy to this incalculable evil. The advice of the venerable Roberts is worthy of notice by all concerned.

His colleague on Erie circuit, was Joseph A. Shackleford. He was a man of great faith and zeal, and mighty in prayer. He was also very successful in his ministry. They labored most harmoniously together. At their last quarterly meeting the presiding elder was not present, but much good was done.

They finished their labors in the neighborhood where Mr. Roberts' family resided. They held three meetings successively. The first was in the house of a well disposed Presbyterian, who had, in consequence of his education, strong prejudices against the Methodists. Nevertheless he was a particular friend of Mr. Roberts, holding him in high esteem. His daughter went to the house of Mr. Roberts for the purpose of attending meeting. During the sermon she became awakened, and was very much exercised on the subject of religion. In consequence, her father refused her permission to remain at home. He had, however, previously invited Mr. Roberts to preach in a new house he was building, and as he said to "christen it." When the house was finished he repeated the invitation, which was accepted. The congregation that attended was large, and the people were much affected, amongst whom was the owner of the house. On the next Sabbath he and thirty others joined the Methodist Episcopal Church.

He and Mr. Shackleford went to Baltimore to attend the conference. He was there ordained elder. A fac simile of his credentials is given on the opposite page. He was returned to Erie circuit. Thornton Fleming was his presiding elder, and James Watts his colleague.

The circuit was large, embracing all the territory now included in the Erie conference, except the part in New York state. It required six weeks to go round it.

KNOW all Men by these Presents, That I, Francis Asbury, Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in America, under the Protection of ALMIGHTY GOD, and with a single Eye to his Glory, by the Impulsion of my Hands, and Prayer, have this Day set apart

Robert Q. Roberts

for the Office of an Elder in the said Methodist Episcopal Church; a Man whom I judge to be well qualified for that Work: And do hereby recommend him to all whom it may concern, as a proper Person to administer Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and to feed the Flock of Christ, so long as his Spirit and Practice are such as become the Gospel of Christ, and he continueth to hold fast the Form of sound Words, according to the established Doctrines of the Gospel.

In Testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my Hand and Seal this twentieth Day of March in the Year of our Lord, One Thousand Eight Hundred and

Baltimore
Maryland

From *Philadelphia*



Notwithstanding, he had sufficient work to do on his circuit, he possessed a missionary spirit, and therefore enlarged the field of his labors. He went into New York state and commenced preaching, at the Beech Flats, near Jamestown. On his way there, he stopped at a house, and prayed with the family. The mother was very much interested in the prayer; and what made her more so was, that it was the first which her daughter, then a young woman, had ever heard. The year was one of peace, but not of great prosperity.

During the year he preached in Meadville, at a tavern. It was a cold night, and while preaching he kept on his over-coat. He was rather late in beginning. In the course of the sermon, he was expostulating in language similar to the following: "If you want honor, it is more honorable to serve God than the devil. If a man want pleasure, he need not go to Satan for it, as he has been a stranger to it for more than five thousand years. If he want riches, were he to sweep hell he could not find a sixpence." At this a little man raised his head in a corner of the house, and said, "Why, sir! then money is scarce there as well as here." All, however, were attentive, and treated the preacher with great civility.

At Coneaut, near Waterford, there was a large congregation. On one occasion, the snow was deep, in consequence of which, he was late, and on his arrival the congregation had collected. He preached and met class. They had a lively meeting, and it was proposed to have preaching in the evening, which was agreed on. Many of the people remained. There was no sign of dinner, however, and as he had eaten nothing since early in the morning, he took the liberty of going into the kitchen, just before night, and getting a supply of what was indispensable under the circumstances. The meeting continued till nine or ten o'clock, the exercises being very interesting.

On the following day, as he was about starting to Lexington, the lady of the house proposed to ride along with him a few miles for the purpose of visiting a friend. As snow had fallen, of course the surface of the road was not perceptible. In passing through a beech flat, the lady's horse stepped on some roots, and his foot got so entangled among them that he could not extricate it with all his best endeavors. Mr. Roberts, therefore, went to the nearest house and borrowed an axe; and by applying it to the roots, set the horse at liberty. This so detained him that night began to come on when about eight or ten miles from his appointment. There was no path or track, and he had to steer by the blazes or marks on the trees which pointed out the course. About sun-down, he arrived at a small uncomfortable cabin, and found only some children in it, the parents not being at home. He asked if he could stay all night, and the oldest informed him that he could. He hesitated, not knowing what to do for the best. To reach his place of destination, appeared impracticable, as he could not see the blazes on the trees. The appearance of things, however, in and around the house, together with the absence of the parents, seemed to urge him to go on; the children were very dirty, being covered over with bear's grease, and every thing around was in keeping with their persons. While thus pondering the matter over, and asking the children some questions, the mother arrived, her personal appearance being no better than the children's. He inquired of her, also, if he could have the privilege of staying during the night, to which she cordially assented, though she informed him that they had no bread in the house, nor any thing to make it of. He alighted, and a short time afterward the father himself came home from hunting. He was open and friendly, and treated the stranger with every mark of hospitality, kindly welcoming him to the best he had. He had no grain for his horse, but was abundantly

supplied with good hay, which he furnished most willingly. On the day previous he had killed a large bear of three hundred pounds weight; and this accounted for the greasy clothes and faces and hands of the whole family, as well as the glossy appearance of some of the household utensils, well besmeared as they were with the oil. For supper, the kind woman put a plentiful supply of fat bear's meat, in a large kettle over the blazing fire, and then after a while filled it up with potatoes. When this mixture was well boiled, a quantity was put into dishes, and set on a table made of a slab. They sat down to the repast; but such was its uninviting appearance, that, though hungry, Mr. Roberts could eat but very little. They had no regular bed for their guest to sleep on; they furnished, however, as a substitute, a moderate supply of straw spread on the floor before the fire. On this he lay, with his feet toward the fire, his saddle-bags serving for a pillow, and his great-coat for covering. As the night was cold, he did not get much sleep. Next morning, the same dish was prepared, but in somewhat better order, which rendered it more palatable; or rather an increase of hunger had so far sharpened the appetite of the preacher, as to overcome his fastidiousness.

During his stay, he held considerable religious conversation with the father of the family, who seemed to feel the force of what was said. Indeed the religious views and feelings of better days were revived. In his secluded situation, he had very little means of spiritual improvement, and the call of the minister reminded him of other times. At his earnest request, Mr. Roberts baptized several of his children, adding such words of exhortation as were best calculated to make good impressions on the minds of the whole household, who, as already stated, entertained him with the very best they had, in the kindest manner.

He set out after breakfast for Lexington, his next appointment, which was on the Sabbath day. Three persons

there, who professed to have experienced religion sometime before, and who had been raised under Baptist influence, wished to be immersed. He had never before witnessed baptism by immersion, and was at some loss to proceed in the most appropriate manner. The weather was very cold. After preaching, he went to Coneaut Creek and immersed them. He then had to walk about half a mile to the place where he lodged. On arriving there his clothes were frozen quite stiff. He, however, suffered no injury.

While he filled the office of pastor on the Erie circuit, an occurrence took place between him and a Mr. M'Lean, a Seceder minister, who resided near him, which may deserve a passing notice. The following are substantially the leading points of the matter: Mr. John Leech, Esq., an influential Methodist, happened to lodge at a house with Mr. M'Lean, and had to sleep in the same bed with him. They both entered into a very general but friendly conversation on the subject of religion, which lasted a great part of the night, being continued after they had gone to bed. Mr. M'Lean was a Calvinist of the purest kind, of the true Seceder school, in all its rigidity. Mr. Leech was a man of great mildness, but very firmly grounded in, and well acquainted with, Methodist doctrines. Each maintained his side of the question with great tenacity. But the minister asserted that, as the Methodists were very ignorant people, he could convince them of the error of their ways in one discourse, had he the opportunity. Mr. Leech thought otherwise; and as Mr. M'Lean very earnestly requested the privilege, he promised he would endeavor to procure a place for him to preach in among them, and would insure attendance. Accordingly, the house of James Walker was obtained. Mr. Leech notified all the Methodists to attend; and not only they, but most of the Presbyterians and Seceders, and others, in that part

of the country were present. Mr. Roberts, hearing of the intended discourse, arranged his appointments so as to be there also. He was at first somewhat embarrassed, considering the advantages and pretensions of Mr. M'Lean, and his own slender opportunities. But he was familiar with Scripture, and the arguments adduced by Fletcher and Wesley on his side of the question, and purposed being present, without any previous design of furnishing a reply.

The day arrived, and a large congregation attended. The text was, "Contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," and the sermon was about four hours in length. He inquired,

1. Whether Christ died for all the sins of all men. He maintained that Christ did not die for all the sins of all men; for then all men must be saved.

2. Or for some of the sins of all men. If this were true then none could be saved.

3. Or for all the sins of some men. This he affirmed, for some only would be saved.

When he had done, Mr. Roberts requested the privilege of reply, which Mr. M'Lean granted.

Mr. Roberts then gave out the hymn,

"Blow ye the trumpet, blow,
The gladly solemn sound," &c.,

which was sung by himself and his Methodist brethren with the full amount of their usual animation.

Mr. Roberts then commenced his refutation. He took hold of Mr. M'Lean's propositions and assailed them with Scripture and argument very much to his annoyance. But this Mr. M'Lean could not endure; and when Mr. Roberts had spoken about ten minutes he interrupted him. He said that, as a Seceder, he could not hear him preach, and then proceeded to retire, intimating to his people that he wished them to leave with him. This produced con-

siderable commotion in the congregation. The Seceders at once retired with their minister, the Methodists being in no very good humor at the bigotry of the minister and some of his people. Mr. Roberts had only asked fifteen minutes more, but this was denied him. He, therefore, desisted for the sake of peace. The Seceders generally were displeased at the course which their minister took; and ever after, when Mr. Roberts preached in their neighborhood, even down to his last visit in 1841, many of them were among his hearers. Such, indeed, was his kind manner, even on points of controversy, that those who differed from him would hear him gladly and without offense.

The old original cabin, twelve feet square, during his travels east of the mountains, had fallen into decay, or, becoming too small for the occupants, was succeeded by another. This was what is called a *double cabin*, having a cabin at each end, and a space between them in the form of a hall. It ran east and west. The whole length was thirty-four feet and the width sixteen, one end being sixteen feet long and the other twelve, and the space between six feet.

The east end was the smallest, or the one of twelve feet length by sixteen in width. It had a stone chimney, very rudely built. A partition divided it into two rooms, one of which was designed for a study or preacher's room. The floors, above and below, were laid. There was a six-light window in each room, but no sash to raise. The door from the study, or the southeastern room, opened into the porch or open space between the two buildings. A door communicated from the study into the other room, which was used as a bed-room. The study had barely space enough for a bed, table, and stool, which will bring to the mind very naturally its dimensions and appearance. There was a loft over this end of the building, with a door or large hole opening into the porch, a loose ladder serving in the place of stairs.

The western, or larger end of the house, was sixteen feet long, and the same in width. It formed one room. It had a wooden chimney, topped off with cat and clay. The floor was of puncheons from four to ten feet long, according to the space designed to be filled by them. They were nothing more than thick slabs riven from logs of very clear wood which splits easy, and were hewed on one side, and on the ends of the other, so as to rest level on the sleepers. When the floor was laid, they were smoothed off into one level surface by the adze: the saw was then run through the joints to make them lie close, and they were keyed by two large wedges on one side of the floor pressing them closely together. When the puncheons shrunk, which is always the case with green ones, they were keyed anew, the saw again being run between the joints, and the whole made tight by driving the wedges closer. When the work of keying is neglected, or overlooked, which is by no means uncommon, large crevices admit freely the wind, and small articles, as spoons, knives, &c., are in danger of being lost by falling through. The loft of this end was supported with strong round poles or small logs, stripped of the bark. The flooring first adopted was of loose clapboards, but this was improved by substituting loose plank, carefully breaking the joints by a second row over the first. At a still future day the upper floor was regularly laid by the plough and groove, and nailing the plank firmly down. The door of this end opened toward the south, which was in the direction of the spring, and just adjoining the porch. There was a hole for a window on the south side near the western end; but this was never converted into a regular window: the rough wooden shutter was put in sometimes at night, and fastened with wooden pins. No improvement was made to this, even after R. R. Roberts had become a Bishop. The lower floor too of this end retained its puncheon covering to the very last of his residence there.

The logs of both ends of the building, on its first erection, were unhewed, but were subsequently scutched down with an axe, after the process of scoring had been attended to. The scoring was done with a common axe, while the hewing needed the broad axe, managed, too, by a dexterous hand.

The porch hall, or space between the two ends, was about six feet wide, and was laid with puncheons. It answered many excellent purposes. One part of it was occupied with meal and flour bags or barrels, and another was used in summer as a sitting room: it was also the favorite area for the busy, yet necessary exercise of the great or small spinning-wheel, during the summer and fall seasons.

One uniform roof covered both ends and the intervening space. Rows of poles extended from end to end, about two and a half feet apart, on which the clapboards rested. The clapboards were boards about six inches wide and four feet long, riven from timber which split readily and evenly. Other rows of poles were laid over these to keep them in their place. When displaced by accident, or worn by time, roofs of this kind invariably leak more or less, in the time of heavy rains, and even in ordinary rains, when the wind blows high. But there is a remedy. When the leaking becomes very troublesome, about a dozen sugar troughs are placed on the loft under where the leaking is greatest, and thus the water is prevented from descending to the lower floor. With such a remedy as this, the spaces over the beds, are generally protected; and as to the other parts of the house, a little leaking does no harm, for a few hours of sun-shine will entirely dry all up. Small inconveniences, however, like those mentioned, have nothing particularly troublesome to the pioneer; and both Mr. and Mrs. Roberts, were entirely at home under such circumstances.

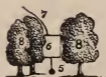
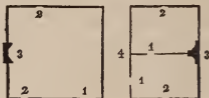
A large spring of pure, soft water, issuing from the

slaty sand-stone, formed a little pool in a basin worn into the solid rock beneath. It was about fifty feet from the southwest corner of the house, and was shaded with three healthy sugar-trees, which had been topped off when young, and now spread their branches horizontally, and threw one unbroken shade on a large space around the living spring. About four or five feet immediately below the crystal pool, stood the spring-house, through which ran the rapid purling stream issuing from the rock reservoir. Its floor was hewed out into oblong cisterns, in which were placed the milk pans and butter crocks, and to which recourse was had in summer for the cool, and in winter for the comparatively warm supplies of milk and butter for daily family use, and which the luxurious inhabitant of a city covets in vain, and for which no artificial preparation of ice can ever be a substitute, with all the skill of the confectioner. The little hut, which covered the precious current and milk cisterns, was of rude logs and rough clapboards, and was protected by a rough door, hung on wooden hinges, and fastened with a pin. The spring-house is an indispensable appendage to the western cabin, and answers for pantry and cellar, with the exception of the hole under the floor of the cabin, scooped out of the earth, and made air tight, over which is placed a loose puncheon, that can be raised when it is necessary to have access to the deposit of potatoes, turnips, &c.

The cabin of the new settler in the western wilds, is mostly associated with great comfort and much contentment, when it is superintended by a good house-keeper, who puts the impress of cleanliness and neatness on all things in and around it. And this is peculiarly the case when religion, that holy and joy-diffusing principle, crowns the whole. Many a comfortable night's lodging have we enjoyed in such humble, yet happy dwellings. And, moreover, a family residence of five years in one of them,

endears to our mind the name and idea of a clean western cabin, connected as it is with the most delightful associations, in a manner that will never be forgotten.

The following diagram presents the ground plan of the itinerant's hall, as it stood, when he occupied it, from 1805 to 1808, the years in which he traveled Shenango, Erie and Pittsburg circuits; and also from 1816 to 1819, after he had been made Bishop.



- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| 1. Doors. | 5. Spring. |
| 2. Windows, or holes. | 6. Spring-house. |
| 3. Fireplaces. | 7. Spring run. |
| 4. Hall, or porch. | 8. Sugar-trees. |

The engraving on the opposite page is a view of the double cabin, as far as it can be represented from the best sources of information.

CHAPTER VII.

ENTRANCE ON THE EPISCOPACY.

IN the spring of 1807, Mr. Roberts was appointed to the Pittsburg circuit. It embraced at that day all the tract of country lying between Laurel Hill and Alleghany River.



Bishop Roberts' double Cabin.

It extended to Conemaugh and Black Lick, and then on to Brush Creek. It comprised Pittsburg, Ligonier Valley, Greensburg, Connelsville, Sewickly, and indeed the country between the Youghaganey and Alleghany Rivers. This year he took Pittsburg again into the circuit, it having been dropped a few years previously. He there preached in the upper story of an old warehouse which had been used as a sail loft. The Methodists in that place were principally English, and had kept up a society among themselves in the absence of the traveling preachers. Mr. Wrenshall, a local preacher, labored zealously to keep them together, and preached also to the citizens. Mr. Thomas Cooper, a man of much worth, and who is yet (August, 1843) alive, filled the office of leader to great advantage. In the spring of the same year, the Lambdins moved there, and greatly strengthened the society. The widow of Dr. Tucker, who was a member of the Church, opened her house for preaching. The elements of the first Methodist society in Pittsburg, were somewhat unlike each other, being composed of persons from different nations, as well as of opposite constitutional temperaments. But, under the plastic hands of Mr. Roberts, they were molded so far into one, as to secure co-operation. His mildness, great prudence and unaffected humility, added to his acknowledged abilities, enabled him to do what few others could accomplish. He was not only himself a man of peace, but had great skill in promoting it even among persons of the most discordant elements. When the last quarterly meeting was held, which was at Pittsburg, a brother of influence sent in his resignation of office as a local preacher. At the request of Mr. Roberts, this was postponed till he could have an interview with him. He saw him soon afterward, and dissuaded him from his purpose, and the difficulties of the case were adjusted. The local preacher continued in the Church, exercising the duties of his office, and at a

future day gave five hundred dollars toward erecting the Smithfield-street church. He lived and died a pious man, and a useful official member of the Church.

The appointed colleague of Rev. R. R. Roberts, for the Pittsburg circuit, was John W. Harris; but for some cause he never made his appearance on his field of labor. The presiding elder accordingly sent another preacher to fill his place. The substitute was one with whom the presiding elder had little or no acquaintance. He professed to be a Methodist preacher recently from the south, but previously from the north. Mr. Roberts, after having gone two rounds without hearing any thing about the presiding elder's arrangement, was informed that a young man was on another part of the circuit. As he knew of no such person, and learnt that one of his appointments was at his brother's, John Roberts, he went to see him. The young man preached, and was very boisterous and noisy. After dinner they walked out into the woods, and during their conversation Mr. Roberts desired to know by what authority he was on the circuit. He replied that he was sent by the presiding elder, showing, at the same time, a letter containing his authority. Before long, however, the young man turned out to be unworthy of the confidence reposed in him, and Mr. Roberts was again left alone on the circuit, being compelled to fill its numerous appointments in the best way he possibly could.

The lessons to be learned from the foregoing are the following:

Persons recently converted, in most cases, ought not to be put into the sacred and important office of the ministry. No clergyman should be a *novice*, that is, one who has lately professed to be a Christian.

Strangers are also to be received with great caution, whether foreigners or natives, that come from a distance. If, however, they come properly recommended, from the

powers that be, they ought not to suffer; the interests of Christianity do not require that they should.

But strolling preachers should receive no countenance at all. By strolling preachers, we mean those who do not stay long enough in one place to form and acquire a character. Persons of the worst principles have, in numberless instances, imposed on Christian Churches by frequently changing their residences. Such clerical vagrants ought not to hold the important office of preaching the Gospel under any consideration whatever.

Besides, both ministers and people should be very careful not to receive strangers until they produce their regular testimonials of office. Strangers of real merit never expect to be received in the same manner as if they were fully known, neither will they be displeased if the people should manifest a disposition to test the strength and stability of their virtue and piety. Were the caution just given at all times observed, those who are disposed to impose themselves on religious people as preachers, would be so repulsed, as not to be able any longer to deceive the unwary.

Not that Christians or Christian Churches, are chargeable with the hypocrisy of the few; except so far as they encourage them by a laxity of Christian discipline.

Mr. Roberts' family lived at Shenango, while he traveled Pittsburg circuit; hence his visits home were few and transient. The mill, too, was on his hands, from which he expected to derive some revenue, to enable him to prosecute with less anxiety his itinerant labors. In this, however, he was entirely disappointed. He purposed this year not to go to conference, in order that he might have an opportunity to give some attention to his domestic concerns, as well as to husband time so as to be able to attend the General conference, of which he and all the traveling elders were then ex-officio members. In his absence from the conference, charges were brought against him and William Page, for

neglecting their appointments; and a communication from the secretary was sent to each, reproving them for their delinquency. Both of them had families, and they were compelled as a matter of necessity and of duty, to pay some attention to them, especially as they received little or no support on their circuits, and their private means were very small. It is probable, that as the leading members of the conference were unmarried men, they were not, for want of experience in domestic concerns, able to make due allowances for persons who had the care of families. Be this as it may, the information was communicated to them, as already stated, that their course had been objected to. Mr. Page, in consequence of this, which he considered ill-treatment, refused to go to his appointment, and of course located, and continued so for many years. At a future time, however, he re-entered the traveling field, and was faithful at his work till death. He was a most pious man, and an able minister; and was worthy of a far better lot than an unreasonable reproof for doing what, under the circumstances, was his duty. Mr. Roberts differed in opinion with Mr. Page. He thought that if they deserved reproof, it was the duty of the conference to admonish them of their error; and if they did not deserve it, as they believed they did not, it was their duty to bear it as a cross, and not to leave the work of the Lord, merely because the conference, by wrong information had not rightly understood their case. The conference was certainly in error, for reproving the good men as they did, and Mr. Page was also in error for making their mistake a rule of conduct for himself.

We base the following remarks on the foregoing: A Methodist preacher, who is useful and well received, ought not to locate for any cause, unless it be one of the most extreme character. No present poverty, or dread of future want of family provision, should lead him to take this step. Those who have done so have suffered more themselves,

and their families with them, than they would have if they had continued to serve the Church amid the greatest poverty, and under the greatest privations. It is the duty of the Church to furnish their ministers with ample means of sustenance, and thus leave them without excuse or embarrassment. They ought to support the *minister*, not the man—not the *popular* minister, but *the minister* and his family, whether popular or unpopular. Very frequently, however, the mere popular preacher is abundantly provided for, while the more worthy and every day laborer is neglected. It is scarcely necessary to add that such an unjust mode of procedure always brings great reproach on the neglecters, and often seriously injures the faithful man of God. These things, in a Christian community, ought not to be.

In 1808, Mr. Roberts was appointed to West Wheeling circuit. Benjamin Rogers was his colleague. He arranged his affairs at Shenango as well as he could, and took his wife along to the circuit. There were then neither parsonages nor rented houses for preachers; neither was there any family provision; and, moreover, there was but very little quarterage. His wife lived with her aunt, Worley, near Cadiz, Ohio, and there found, what is not always met with by preachers' wives, a home.

After traveling nearly two rounds on his circuit, and before the time of holding the first quarterly meeting, he had to leave for General conference. He arranged matters as well as he could, so as to be able to attend. He had already expended all his funds, with the exception of fifty cents, in moving his family. These funds must have been small indeed, as the distance they moved was only about sixty miles. His wife had rode on horse-back, and they had packed most of their clothes and bedding on their horses. The whole of their funds, therefore, could not have been more than two or three dollars, from which, by special foresight,

a half-dollar was saved to meet some exigency. He was anxious to go to the General conference, but did not know where to borrow the money necessary to take him. He concluded, however, to ask his colleague for aid. He met him on the circuit, and after preaching for him, inquired if he could loan him some money. But his colleague was as scarce of funds as himself. He said he had only one half dollar in the world, but he would let him have that with all his heart, if it would do him any good. Mr. Roberts concluded to take it; and thus, with his own half dollar, he now had the sum of one whole dollar, leaving the preacher and Mrs. Roberts at home moneyless. He had some money owing to him, however, on Pittsburg circuit, either as arrearages for books or some other debt. He purposed, therefore, to call on his creditor and ask for payment. With his dollar he set out on his journey, a distance of about three hundred miles. He crossed the Ohio River, went toward Connelsville, and traveled on till he reached the *Glades*, in Somerset county, Pennsylvania, near where the man lived who was owing him the money. But, as he resided some distance from the road, Mr. Roberts stopped at the house of a friend for the night. Next morning the kind lady filled one end of his saddle-bags with oats and the other with biscuit and cheese. Having now provisions plenty, he concluded to proceed on his journey with his solitary dollar, and not trouble the friend who was indebted to him. The truth is, he would rather live on half allowance of bread and cheese all the way to Baltimore than ask for the payment of a debt, however small.

With a dollar in his pocket, and bread and cheese, together with oats, in his saddle-bags, he proceeded on his journey toward Baltimore. He stopped about noon in the woods, fed his horse on the oats, and eat some bread and cheese himself, slaking his thirst at a pure chrysal fountain, without the aid of gourd, cup, or glass. The first

night he put up at a tavern, at which he took neither supper nor breakfast, and fed his horse on hay alone. Of course his tavern bill was light. During the next day he drew on his saddle-bags as on the day before, for supplies for himself and his horse, and at night he reached the dwelling of an old friend, who entertained him quite hospitably. His next stopping place was on his old circuit, so that he found no want of entertainment until he reached Baltimore, the seat of the General conference. On his arrival at the city he had five cents of his dollar left.

Could any one undertake such a journey, under such circumstances, unless he had been trained, like Mr. Roberts, to hardships and privations? Certainly not. The adventures connected with locating and improving the Shenango settlement formed an excellent school for the future pioneer itinerant. He had often been hungry and left without money, and had encamped in the woods times without number in his former days, and he could endure the same again when duty required.

In Baltimore he lodged at the house of a Mr. Thornburg, a member of the Church, who treated him with great kindness. His clothing was coarse and had been much worn. He was appointed to preach in Light-street church; and supposing the people there to be tinctured a little with pride, he delivered a severe sermon on the subject. In a few days he was waited on at his room by a tailor, who took his measure for a vest and pantaloons; but by whom he was authorized Mr. Roberts never learned. The Church in Baltimore was then composed of generous souls, and they have transmitted the spirit of their own liberality to their successors in the Church. Many a suit of clothes have these kind people given to the needy itinerant within the last sixty years. The vest and pantaloons came in very good time to Mr. Roberts, as his resources were limited indeed.

Little did he think, at that time, that in a few months he would be selected as pastor for the Light-street church. But his preaching during the session of the General conference was so acceptable to the people of Baltimore, that they solicited Bishop Asbury to send him amongst them; which accordingly was done, as we shall mention more particularly hereafter.

At this General conference very important business was transacted. The conference was formerly composed of all the ordained elders. This, however, took too many preachers from their work, beside incurring great expense and making the General conference unwieldy. Those from certain annual conferences, such as Baltimore, Philadelphia, and others near the seat of the General conference, could easily attend, while those who resided in the west, southwest and northeast, owing to the great distance and the expenses incurred, could not attend without much difficulty. Hence, from the part of Baltimore conference west of the mountains only Robert R. Roberts and Asa Shinn attended; and from the Western conference only Wm. M'Kendree, William Burke, John Sale, Benjamin Lakin and Elisha Bowman.

A motion was made and debated that the presiding elders should be elected by the conferences, and not appointed by the Bishops. The motion was lost after full consideration. Mr. Roberts voted that the conferences should elect the presiding elders. He continued to be of that opinion till 1824, or some years afterward; but on carefully weighing the whole matter he became convinced that the safer way for the Church was to have them appointed by the Bishops. He always wished, especially during the earlier part of his episcopacy, to exercise as little power as possible; and on this account, after he had been chosen Bishop, he retained his former opinion, and desired to be relieved from the responsibility of appointing the presiding elders. The good

of the Church, as already stated, together with the evils arising from frequent elections, induced him to change his views, having the clearest conviction that those views were wrong. His early opinions, we think, were formed under the mistaken notion which some inculcated, that the presiding elders would be generally chosen as delegates to the General conference, and if the Bishops had the power of appointing them, they might through them exercise undue influence in the councils of the Church. The truth is, that the present mode has been so well tested, and the administration of the Bishops has also been so wise and salutary, that no alteration could be made for the better, while doubtless if one were made it would be for the worse.

At this conference, Wm. M'Kendree was elected Bishop.

We shall here record an historical fact respecting the restrictive regulations or constitutional articles of our Church. When the subject respecting a delegated General conference came up, it was referred to a committee composed of two from each of the annual conferences. The committee consisted of fourteen, as the number of conferences was then but seven. Wm. M'Kendree and Wm. Burke were chosen for the Western conference. But before the committee was ready to report, Wm. M'Kendree was elected Bishop, and of course Wm. Burke was left alone to represent the interests of the Western conference. On the first meeting of the committee they conversed largely on the provisions which their report to the conference should contain. After considerable deliberation, they agreed to appoint a sub-committee of three to draft a report to be submitted to the conference, subject however to such additions or modifications as a future meeting of the whole committee might see fit to make. The sub-committee consisted of Ezekiel Cooper, Joshua Soule and Philip Bruce. When the sub-committee met, it was agreed, after a full exchange of sentiments, that each should draw up a separate

paper, comprising the necessary restrictions or regulations, in the best way he could, and that each would present his form in writing, and that they would then adopt the one deemed best, with such amendments as would be agreed on. When the sub-committee met to examine their plans, Mr. Cooper had his regularly drawn up, and Mr. Soule also had his, but Philip Bruce had nothing committed to writing. On comparing the two papers, Mr. Bruce fell in with the main points in the one brought forward by Joshua Soule. Mr. Cooper plead for his own with his usual ability; but he finally agreed to Mr. Soule's plan with some slight additions or amendments suggested by the others. At the next meeting of the whole committee, although the plans of Ezekiel Cooper and Joshua Soule were both before the committee, Mr. Soule's was adopted by all the members, with some slight modifications.

When the report of the committee was brought before the entire conference, the morning session was completely taken up with it, it being canvassed with considerable warmth and ability. One party was in favor of delegation, and another, which was strong, was for representation by seniority. On the votes being taken, the report was rejected by a majority. The New England and Western conferences, at their sessions previous to the General conference, had each elected seven delegates, in order to secure a representation at the General conference. The seven delegates of the New England conference were in attendance. The following names are recollected by Wm. Burke, who has kindly furnished us with them, namely, John Brodhead, Elijah R. Sabin, Thomas Branch, Elijah Hedding, Joshua Soule and Oliver Beale. The members from the Western conference, and those of New England, had partly agreed the day previous, that if the General conference did not admit of representation, they would leave the conference forthwith, and return to their appointments. Accordingly,

when the report of the committee was rejected, the New England delegates arose in the conference and asked leave to retire, and return to their work, as they could be of no further use in the conference. They gave assurance at the same time, that they would not create any difficulty in the Church, but peaceably go home and attend to the duties of their several appointments. Wm. Burke from the Western conference, also arose in the conference and made the same request and declaration. Elisha W. Bowman did so too. John Sale and Benjamin Lakin, however, declined taking such a step. The eight members then retired in a body, six from the New England and two from the Western conference, and immediately afterward met in a room to consult and prepare for their journey. In the afternoon Bishops Asbury and M'Kendree sought an interview with those delegates, which was obtained. They all knew what were the sentiments of the two Bishops on the subject of delegation, and they were confident that they would use their influence in having the vote re-considered. After a pleasant afternoon's interview, they all agreed to attend the conference next morning, which they did, and the vote was accordingly re-considered, when the question was settled in regard to the principle of delegation. Had it not been for the firm stand that these eight delegates took, nothing would probably have been done at that conference in favor of a delegated General conference.

Thus, to a very considerable extent, we owe to Bishop Soule the restrictive regulations or rather constitution of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which exhibits a degree of wisdom and prudent foresight, that characterizes men of the first mental powers. In fact, those who know Bishop Soule, would expect from him the wise deliberation necessary to produce such a measure as the constitutional restrictions of the Methodist Episcopal Church. This piece of history we have thought proper here to insert, as it is not

yet on record in a published form, and probably never would be, if our humble pen were to pass it by.*

As has already been observed, Rev. R. R. Roberts' preaching in Baltimore, during the session of the General conference, so attracted the attention both of the Church and citizens, that they were exceedingly desirous to have him stationed among them. Application was at once made to Bishop Asbury to change him from West Wheeling circuit to Baltimore city. Bishop Asbury himself had formed the highest opinion of him, both as a man and a minister. Accordingly, in November of the same year, the Bishop wrote to him, instructing him to leave West Wheeling circuit and move to Baltimore. Mr. Roberts could not imagine why the Bishop should appoint him to Baltimore; and as the whole was so unexpected, and as he conceived, so much out of place, he concluded, on receiving the Bishop's letter, that he could not go. He did not think himself suited for such a station, and withal he had no money to defray the expenses of traveling. Bishop Asbury on learning Mr. Roberts' conclusion, wrote again, insisting on his removal, and also sent on another preacher officially to supply his place. He was now in no small perplexity. His place was supplied by another, he had no money to carry him to Baltimore, and he still considered the change as utterly out of place. Besides, Bishop Asbury observed in his second letter to him, that "he was always behind."

* In Bangs' History of the Methodist Episcopal Church, volume ii, page 229, et seq., the third restrictive rule is omitted, by mistake, no doubt. Rules to the number of six are given, but the proviso to the last is converted into a separate rule and made the sixth. The omitted rule reads, "3. They shall not change or alter any part or rule of our government, so as to do away episcopacy, or destroy the plan of our itinerant general superintendency." The reader will find this rule in all the editions of the Discipline from 1808 inclusive, and upward. We mention this, lest the error might go uncorrected in the history, and the rule might be a matter of dispute in future years.

This wounded him considerably, insomuch that he talked seriously of going home, and manifested an unusual share of obstinacy under the circumstances. The good Bishop had been led to conclude from his slight acquaintance with Mr. Roberts, that he was behind in the fulfillment of his duty. It was his extreme diffidence and modesty, however, and not a disposition of indolence that led him to adopt this opinion. On this occasion his pious and faithful wife admonished him, making in substance the following remarks to him, which we took down from her own lips, she sanctioning them, after being read to her: "Robert, it is your duty to go to Baltimore. Should you return home, you will have greater and more numerous difficulties than any you have ever had before. Already you have performed many arduous duties, and you can, through the aid of Divine grace, perform this. Bishop Asbury has great confidence in you, and it is your duty to obey him. We have already undertaken many difficult journeys, and, though we have neither money nor means, we can accomplish this. Let us go as soon as possible." These remarks of Mrs. Roberts produced the desired effect, and he accordingly determined to go to Baltimore.

Their goods were mostly at Shenango. Mrs. Roberts' best clothes were there also. Shenango being sixty miles distant, they could not go that way without losing more time than was proper, especially as they had already delayed for several weeks. Their funds, too, would allow of no unnecessary traveling at that time. They raised a few dollars for their journey to Baltimore, but how much we cannot say; the sum, however, must have been very small indeed. They went on horse-back, Mrs. Roberts having a horse as well as Mr. Roberts, and this being the cheapest mode of traveling. They staid, for the most part, at night, with the acquaintances he had formed during his ministerial travels. When they wished to eat during the

day, they had recourse to the supplies of their saddle-bags, which were occasionally stored by their friends with cakes and cheese. They arrived safely at Baltimore, a little before Christmas.

His colleagues were Seely Bunn, N. Snethen and Samuel Coates. Mr. Bunn boarded with Mr. Roberts, and had a room up stairs for his study, while Messrs. Snethen and Coates lived together. Their temporal wants were sufficiently supplied by the stewards. Mrs. Roberts continued to observe her former industrious and economical habits, cooking their own victuals and doing her own house-work, and, of course, their wants were easily supplied. The steward who attended to their temporal necessities was induced to remark at one time that sister Roberts lived on half of the supplies that were requisite for others. This she could easily do; as she had no children, had excellent health, and had been taught industry and economy by the circumstances of her former life.

At the following conference in 1809, he was re-appointed to the Baltimore station, as he had served the people entirely to their satisfaction.

In 1810, he was stationed at Fell's Point, and served the people of his charge much to their edification. While there he came in contact with the Rev. Alexander M'Cain, with whom he had some difficulties. He found the stewards' books in confusion, and proceeded to rectify and correct them. This pressed with some weight on Mr. M'Cain, and the matter was brought before the annual conference, where the course of Mr. Roberts was sanctioned, and, consequently, that of Mr. M'Cain considered more or less censurable. This circumstance so affected Mr. M'Cain that, after the conference had decided against him, he observed to Mrs. Roberts, on seeing her in the parsonage, "Your husband has foiled me, and he is the only man that ever could do it," bursting into tears at the same time. It is

probable that Mr. M'Cain never forgave the offense of Mr. Roberts, which amounted to nothing more than defending himself against the attack of this unreasonable and violent man. Whether this defeat led Mr. M'Cain, at a future day, to pen his gross misrepresentations of Methodist episcopacy, in his notorious work of the "History and Mystery," which other misguided authors, such as Annan and Musgrave, have taken for true history, we are not prepared to say. Perhaps some allowances are to be made for the phrensied decisions of Mr. M'Cain, in consequence of his vehement, uncontrolled natural disposition; but it is not so easy to find an apology for those ministerial pamphleteering authors who call him "master," and follow him implicitly.

In 1811, Rev. R. R. Roberts was stationed at Alexandria. Of the events of this year we have no records of any kind. All the information in our possession is, that he bore amongst his people the character of a good pastor. He frequently exchanged pulpits with the Protestant Episcopal minister of the place, whose congregation was both edified and pleased with his ministrations. The doctrine of succession, at that day, had not taken such deep hold of all Protestant Episcopal ministers as to prevent them from exchanging pulpits with the Methodist Episcopal ministers; but at present the exclusive Popery of the American prelatical Church has so far prevailed as to exclude from ministerial character, Methodist, Presbyterian and Baptist clergymen, whose ordination, in an appropriate sense, is virtually presbyterial. This has already led to rank Popery in some instances, and will probably eventuate in Romanizing the whole Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States.

In 1812, Mr. Roberts' appointment was in Georgetown, District of Columbia. While there he had an interview with the President, Mr. Madison. He was introduced, in company with a number of others, and his introduction

was attended with the formalities which usually accompany such interviews. For those formalities he had very little taste; and his reserve on the occasion, as well as his dignified mien, so far attracted the attention of the President, that he desired to form an acquaintance with him, unembarrassed with the forms of courtly life. At a future time, Mr. Roberts again visited him by his express wish, and greeted him and his lady with a cordial shaking of hands, observing, at the same time, that his custom was to salute his friends in this way, and, therefore, he took the liberty to approach the Chief Magistrate and his lady in the free Christian manner he was accustomed to among his own people. Mr. Madison and his lady were delighted, and no doubt profited by the visit, especially as it was terminated by prayer to Almighty God, a practice too much neglected by ministers of the Gospel in their interviews with friends and acquaintances.

He made a short visit to Shenango during this year. On his return through Ligonier he took with him his nephew, George Roberts, son of his brother, John Roberts. He was then about six years of age, having been born, December 6th, 1806. He placed him immediately behind him on his horse, tying him with a girth, so adjusted as to prevent him falling off in ascending steep places. At that time there were no turnpike roads across the mountains, and the direction he traveled in, which was from Ligonier to Washington, crossed the leading roads. By the expedient just mentioned, the boy was preserved from falling, as they went up the steep ascents in passing the numerous defiles of the mountains. Little George was adopted as a son, and treated with all the tender affection of an only child.

During the years 1813 and 1814, Rev. R. R. Roberts was stationed in the city of Philadelphia. He was received by the people there with every mark of respect. He preached a number of charity sermons in the various

churches. On three several occasions he officiated in this way among his Presbyterian brethren with great success and much to their satisfaction.

In the fall of 1814, he visited the west, and did not return for three or four months. This gave great uneasiness to his friends, as they had no information respecting his safety. He went on this occasion as far as Indiana, to the neighborhood of where he subsequently resided, and where his brother, Lewis, had either purchased land or had already moved. While in this region he visited Orleans, Indiana. There was then stationed there, at a garrison, a company of soldiers. In order to amuse themselves, they commenced shooting at a mark, Mr. Roberts being present. They supposed he was entirely unskilled in the art, and tauntingly spoke of his inexperience in such exercises. But all their remarks had no effect on him. As, however, there were one or two present who knew his ability as a marksman, they urged him to try his skill with the rifle. After some persuasion, he consented, and succeeded so well as to surpass fairly the whole company. The greatness of their surprise was exceeded only by the extent of their admiration of the Philadelphia clergyman, whom they ascertained to be no other in early life, than a western pioneer. The soldiers, who followed themselves the calling he had formerly done, found that their visitor could enter into all the narratives of the hunter and pioneer's life. Their mutual narratives called forth the exercise of the most cordial regard and fellow feeling, and they parted on the best terms of friendship.

In the year 1815, he was appointed presiding elder of Schuylkill district, which embraced Philadelphia. Their residence was the third story of the parsonage of St. George's church, the place in which they resided while he was stationed in the city. Little George Roberts lived with them and went to school.

In consequence of the death of Bishop Asbury on the 31st of March, 1816, and the indisposition of Bishop M'Kendree, there was no Bishop at the Philadelphia conference, which sat in Philadelphia, April 18th, 1816. The rule of Discipline requires, that a presiding elder, in the absence of a Bishop, shall preside at the conference; and when there are two or more presiding elders belonging to one conference, which is mostly the case, the Bishop may, by letter or otherwise, appoint the president himself. If, however, no appointment be made by the Bishop, or if the presiding elder appointed by him do not attend, the conference, in either case, has to elect a president by ballot, without debate, from among the presiding elders. In consequence of the events just named, the Philadelphia conference had to elect a president this year; and although Robert R. Roberts was probably the youngest in the conference, he was chosen president by a large majority of votes. At this conference were present many of the delegates from the northern conferences, namely, New York, New England and Genesee, on their way to Baltimore, the seat of the General conference, which was to sit on the first day of May following. He presided with much dignity, mildness and propriety, and discharged the duties of president in all respects so much to the satisfaction of the Philadelphia conference, as well as the delegates of the northern conferences who were present, that the opinion began to be generally entertained that he was a proper person to be chosen Bishop or General Superintendent. The sentiment was carried to the General conference by all the delegates north of Baltimore, and the western delegates fell in very readily with their views.

As Bishop Asbury was dead, and the health of Bishop M'Kendree was poor, and the conferences had become more numerous, and the territorial bounds of the Church were much enlarged, it was thought necessary to increase

the number of Bishops. Accordingly the committee on the episcopacy recommended that two Bishops should be elected; and their report was adopted by the conference. This report says, "It is the opinion of your committee that the state of the superintendency, in consequence of the ever to be lamented death of our venerable father, Bishop Asbury, and the impaired state of the health of Bishop M'Kendree, and the increasing extent of the work, is such as to require immediate and adequate strengthening." They therefore recommended "that two additional Bishops be elected and consecrated." On the 14th of May, Enoch George and Robert Richford Roberts, were elected by ballot, the former having fifty-seven and the latter fifty-five votes out of the one hundred that were cast.

In reference to the circumstances of this election we will add an extract from a letter written by the Rev. James Quinn, a venerable member of the Ohio conference. Alluding to the views of the northern conferences in selecting Mr. Roberts as their candidate for the episcopacy, Mr. Quinn says: "When we of the west heard this, we were surprised and could scarcely believe the report. But we soon found that they were in good earnest about the matter, and that New York and New England would most willingly go with the Philadelphians, for his election to the episcopal office. We heartily approved of the promotion of our fellow backwoodsman, and rejoiced to hear of the event, unexpected though it was. Thus, fifteen years after I heard him deliver his first exhortation, I saw him placed in the episcopacy by the election of the General conference, and the ordination of Bishop M'Kendrec. Though elevated to the most important office in the Church, he still retained the character of being a modest, unassuming man."

In the interval between his election and ordination, he had great mental conflict in order to ascertain his duty, with regard to accepting the office. He thought his brethren

had altogether overrated him, and that he could not meet their expectations, even if he should consent to serve them as Bishop. On this occasion, he had recourse to his old friend and faithful adviser, the Rev. James Quinn, who gave him such salutary lessons of advice in 1801, when perplexed concerning his call to the ministry. Brother Quinn, in a letter to the writer of this work, referring to Mr. Roberts' agitated state of mind, says, "After his election, and just before his ordination, he observed to me, 'I have a great conflict and serious misgivings relative to my election. I think my brethren have greatly overrated me; and I doubt whether I can say, that I am moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon me the office.' I said, 'Your opinion about what your brethren think of you is not the question; but are you not persuaded that you are truly called to this ministration according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ?' He replied, 'I believe it to be agreeable to the will of God, that the office should exist in the Church, and if I can receive the voice of my brethren, as an expression of the will of God, then I may safely answer the question in the affirmative.' This conversation occurred just at the close of Bishop Asbury's interment, and before we left the Eutaw church-yard, Baltimore."

We present to our readers the letter or testimonial of ordination of Bishop Roberts from Bishop M'Kendree:

"Know all men by these presents, that I, WILLIAM M'KENDREE, Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America, under the protection of Almighty God, and with a single eye to his glory, by the imposition of my hands and prayer, (being assisted therein by Philip Bruce, Nelson Reed and William Phœbus, elders of the same Church,) have, on the day and date hereof, set apart, consecrated and ordained ROBERT RICHFORD ROBERTS, (a native of Frederick county in the state of Maryland, born the 2d day of August, 1778, he having been

ordained a deacon in the year 1804, and an elder in the year 1806, by Francis Asbury, Bishop, as his credentials testify, and now having been duly elected by the General conference,) to the office and work of a BISHOP, or SUPERINTENDENT, in the Methodist Episcopal Church, in the United States of America—a man whom we judge to be well qualified for that office and work, and fit to preside over and feed the flock of Christ, so long as his spirit, practice and doctrine are such as becomes the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and he shall submit to and maintain the Discipline and order in the said Methodist Episcopal Church in America.

“In testimony and confirmation whereof, I have hereto set my hand and seal, this 17th day of May, in the year of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, 1816.

“WILLIAM M’KENDREE, [L. s.]”

On the foregoing letter of ordination, we present the following remarks :

1. The document ascribes to the General conference, or body of elders, the chief power in the Church, from whom the Bishop derives his power or office, and to whom he is accountable for the proper discharge of his duties.

2. The ordination is *presbyterial*. That is, presbyters partake in the ordination. Philip Bruce, Nelson Reed and Wm. Phœbus, presbyters, took part in the ordination of Bishop Roberts, in connection with Wm. M’Kendree, Bishop, or Superintendent.

3. The testimonial uses Bishop or Superintendent as convertible terms.

4. The office must be, and is, vacated whenever the person ordained becomes heretic in doctrine, sinful in spirit or practice, or acts at variance with the Discipline and order of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The document says, “So long as his spirit, practice and doctrine are such as becomes the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and he shall submit to

and maintain the Discipline and order in the Methodist Episcopal Church in America.”

On the whole, a Methodist Bishop must *submit* to the order and Discipline of the Church himself: he is bound to *maintain* it, and not to mend or break it: he must be *sound in doctrine*, exemplary in practice, and pious in his spirit and temper: the Gospel of Christ must be the rule of his life; and whenever he ceases to be what is here required, he must cease also to be Bishop.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DUTIES OF BISHOPS.

IN connection with the life of Bishop Roberts, we may present to the reader a brief survey of the manner of constituting a Methodist Bishop, the character he is required to sustain, the powers with which he is invested, the duties he has to perform, his accountability to the Church, and such other matters as arise therefrom.

1. The constituting, making, or ordination of a Bishop, is thus pointed out in the Discipline, page 27: “*Quest. 1. How is a Bishop to be constituted? Ans. By the election of the General conference, and the laying on of the hands of three Bishops, or at least of one Bishop and two elders.*” From this we learn that the constituting, making, or ordination, consists of two things, namely, election by the General conference, and imposition of hands or consecration.

He is *elected* by the General conference. This body is invested with the supreme authority in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and from them the Bishop derives his powers, and to them he is accountable for the right exercise of them. No Bishop, nor any number of them, have any

more power to make a new Bishop than a private member has. The Bishop is elected to his office by the body of elders, or pastors, who feed the flock; he is accountable to them for the proper discharge of his duties; and this body may expel him, if they find reason to do so.

Laying on of hands is the mere act of consecrating a Bishop. This is performed by three Bishops, or by one Bishop and two elders. But if, in consequence of death, expulsion, or any other cause, there be no Bishop remaining in the Church, then the elders, or any three of them selected by the General conference, shall ordain one according to the form of Discipline. Hence, our Bishops are properly ordained by the General conference, first by election, and next by the imposition of the hands of a Bishop and two elders, or by the elders themselves, to whom the supreme power belongs. Indeed, the mere imposition of hands is of little importance, and could be very well dispensed with, did the General conference see fit. Besides, a separate consecration, in addition to election, has the appearance of favoring the sentiment that Methodist Bishops are considered a distinct order of clergy; whereas they are of the same order as presbyters; that is, they are themselves presbyters, to whom certain powers are committed. Still, there is Scriptural precedent for the imposition of hands. Paul and Barnabas were separated to a particular work by imposition of hands and prayer, Acts xiv.

Ordination, then, in the Methodist Episcopal Church is *presbyterial*; that is, it is derived from, and is under the control of the body of presbyters. Mr. Wesley, Dr. Coke and Mr. Creighton, who ordained Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey, were presbyters; and those, too, who ordained Dr. Coke a Superintendent of the Methodist Episcopal Church, were presbyters. Perhaps, in order to avoid the very appearance of an order of clergy superior to presbyters, as well as to preserve the complete oneness of the

entire ministry, imposition of hands in appointing Bishops had better be dispensed with: a mere certificate of office would fully answer every purpose provided for in Scripture, and designed to be accomplished by the appointment of Methodist Bishops. This is, however, a point not worth contending for.

2. The character of a Methodist Bishop may be learned from the Scriptural lessons in the ordination service, the other parts of the service, and the Bishop's letter or parchment of election and consecration.

In the questions and answers comprising the examination of a Bishop in the ordination service, the Bishop to be ordained is expected to conform to the following requirements:

He is required to believe that the Scriptures contain all doctrine necessary for salvation through faith in Christ; and to promise that he will instruct only out of Scripture, and teach nothing except what is proved therefrom. He is required to pray for the true understanding of Scripture that he may teach and exhort with wholesome doctrine, and to withstand and convince the gainsayers.

The following questions and answers will fully show the moral qualities required of a Bishop in our Church:

The Bishop. Are you ready with faithful diligence to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's word, and both privately and openly to call upon and encourage others to the same?

Answer. I am ready, the Lord being my helper.

The Bishop. Will you deny all ungodliness and worldly lust, and live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, that you may show yourself in all things an example of good works unto others, that the adversary may be ashamed, having nothing to say against you?

Answer. I will so do, the Lord being my helper.

The Bishop. Will you maintain and set forward as much as shall lie in you, quietness, love, and peace among all men: and such as shall be unquiet, disobedient, and criminal within your district, correct and punish according to such authority as you have by God's word, and as shall be committed unto you?

“*Answ.* I will so do, by the help of God.

“*The Bishop.* Will you be faithful in ordaining, sending, or laying hands upon others?

“*Answ.* I will so be, by the help of God.

“*The Bishop.* Will you show yourself gentle, and be merciful for Christ's sake, to poor and needy people, and to all strangers destitute of help?

“*Answ.* I will so show myself, by God's help.”

The moral and ministerial qualifications of a Methodist Bishop are such as the Scripture requires; and it is gratifying to learn that these qualities have been possessed by our Bishops in a very high degree. Indeed the care taken in their selection is such, that none except men of the highest religious and ministerial qualifications can be elected for this important office.

3. As to the Scriptural authority on which the appointment of Superintendents rests, we may observe, that Timothy and Titus were endowed with authority over several Churches, embracing the presbyters, deacons and people. These evangelists exercised supervision, the one over Crete and the other over Ephesus; and while the powers exercised by them seem to be greater than those of pastors in charge of one single congregation, yet they do not accord with the powers claimed by prelates. Nevertheless, the following inferences appear to be perfectly legitimate.

(1.) That a degree of superiority exercised by some pastors over others, cannot be contrary to the nature of Church government. The apostles may have appointed

other pastors over Churches, as they did Timothy over Ephesus, and Titus over Crete.

(2.) It is not unscriptural for men to have jurisdiction over more than one particular Church or congregation; for such a power Timothy had over many elders, and Titus over all Crete.

(3.) The governing of Churches, or the ordaining of elders in them, was not so limited to the apostles but that it might be intrusted to others in the Church after their decease.

(4.) That such powers were vested in the elders appears from these words: "The things which thou hast heard from me, confirmed by many witnesses, commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also." Titus was to ordain elders in every city. These elders were the successors of the apostles and of Timothy and Titus, and there were several of them in each Church. The body of elders were therefore the successors of the apostles, and still are their successors, and the appointment of Bishops or Superintendents belongs to them, and is under their control.

(5.) But then there is nothing in the case of Timothy or Titus to authorize, much less to render imperative, a distinct order of clergy having the power of jurisdiction and the right of ordination, except so far as these are intrusted to them and controlled by the presbyters or body of pastors, to whom these were left in charge by the apostles themselves.

Methodist episcopacy recognizes these principles, is founded on them, and its practices correspond with them. It rejects what is called the distinct order of Bishops, and resolves all its power into the body of pastors and people, from whom it derives its authority, and to whom it is responsible for its proper exercise; and thus it well accords with the principles, the spirit and the practice of the New Testament concerning Church government.

4. The *duties* of a Methodist Bishop, as enumerated in the Discipline, are eight in number.

The Church in her economy has carefully guarded against all undefined power or authority in her Bishops. She has definitely prescribed and imposed on them certain duties which they are bound to perform. The Bishops are not members of the General conference. They are not the delegates of any annual conference. They do not vote, neither do they debate, as Bishops, in the General conference. They may deliver their opinions on any topic, but not as debaters. One of them, however, is president, while in the chair, but here he only discharges a specified duty. There is no upper and distinct house of Bishops, nor yet do they, as just stated, even mingle as voters or debaters with the members of the conference. They are required only to perform such duties as are assigned them in the Discipline of the Church. And they are called to a most scrutinizing account at each General conference, respecting the proper discharge of their duties. And even in case of trial and expulsion, they have no appeal to another tribunal; as the General conference, which is the body that acts in their case, is the highest tribunal in the Church. They preside also in the annual conferences, and yet they are not members of any one of them.

To preside in our conferences is the first specified duty of a Methodist Superintendent. This comprehends the presidency of the General conference, and of the annual conferences.

The Bishops are the presidents of the General conference. There is no one specially selected, either by the General conference for the time being, or by themselves, as the president of this body. This is mutually agreed on by the Bishops from time to time, as suits their convenience. But he that is in the chair for the time being is president alone, none of the others, during that time, being presidents.

So, properly, there is but one president, and that one is whoever happens to be in the chair. The senior Bishop, however, by usage, opens the General conference. His seniority is dated from the time of his becoming Bishop; and if several were elected at the same time, the seniority is ascribed to the one who had the highest number of votes.

At annual conferences, when two or more of them are present, but one properly is the official Bishop. Still each presides in turn to suit their state of health and other circumstances; and whatever Bishop fills the chair, he is president alone while in it. But as they divide the conferences among themselves, according to a regular and systematic plan, the one whose previously arranged duty it is to attend the conference, is the official president. Yet, in all cases, as just observed, when another Bishop is present, they divide the official duties between them as suits their convenience.

The presidency of a conference, whether annual or General, requires much knowledge of ecclesiastical affairs. There are many difficult questions to be solved, and points of order to be decided. A person who acts as president or moderator once or twice during his life, must necessarily, from want of practice, be a deficient and awkward officer. In this, as in other things, practice makes perfect. But the Methodist Bishop, who presides over several conferences each year, and whose duty it is so to do during life or efficient service, is always at home in deciding clearly the most difficult questions of order and business. Hence, much time is saved in the dispatch of the business brought before conference, and it is also done with greater accuracy. Perhaps one-third of the time of conference is saved by the superior skill of a permanent president. Indeed the time saved to the whole ministry, and therefore to the people, in consequence of the dispatch occasioned by our well-trained and ready presidents, amounts to the Church to more than

the pastoral labor that could be performed by double the number of our Superintendents during the whole year. Our Bishops, therefore, in the place of being supernumerary officers, are economical savers of the time, and consequently the services of the ministry at large. Besides the accurate and uniform manner in which business is done through their instrumentality, serves as a bond of union in the Church, and prevents many of the errors, with their attendant evils, that would take place, without such an able presidency.

To fix the appointments for the preachers is made, by the decision of General conference, another duty of a Methodist Bishop.

It is generally admitted among the number of abstract rights, that the people have the right of choosing their pastors, and that pastors have also a right to choose what people they will serve. This in theory is very well, but it can rarely be followed out in practice. Hence, most Churches have found it necessary to restrict or regulate the affair for the general good, or to prevent the bad results that might grow out of it. The Presbyterians cannot settle or dismiss a minister without the consent of the presbytery; nor the Protestant Episcopalians without the consent of their Bishop. And among those Churches, in which the congregation and the minister make the matter a subject of negotiation between themselves, the will or choice of the minister and the people is liable to great variations and corrections. Where there is a number of congregations, say twenty, who choose the same minister, only one of them can have his ministerial services; and where there are twenty ministers who would choose the same congregation, only one of them can fill the office. Hence, where neither presbytery, Bishop, nor any other power interferes, the necessity of most cases will disappoint nineteen out of twenty of all the congregations and ministers in any

one Church. The choice, therefore, both of ministers and people, must yield to circumstances.

There are three fundamental principles adopted in the appointment of Methodist ministers, independent of the will either of people or preachers. The first is, the general good of the whole Church, as well as all the parts of it. The second is, suiting the views and wishes of the people as far as is consistent with the general good. And the third is, accommodating the wishes and conveniences of the preachers, as far as the general good will allow, and even suiting the peculiar views or wishes of the people, though contrary to the wishes of the preachers. In following out these principles, especially the first, which is the fundamental one, it is believed that the *will* of God is more especially consulted than in any other way, whatever may be the means or methods adopted. And it is right that the will of God, as far as it can be ascertained, should be regarded beyond every thing else. And perhaps the accomplishing of the greatest amount of good, or aiming to do so, by lawful means, will approach as near to following the will of God as any other mode.

It is generally known, that Methodist preachers are changed every two years at furthest, and are liable to be changed every year, and, if necessary, even oftener. This is the rule respecting all those on circuits and stations. Presiding elders may continue four years in the same district. Those in colleges, also editors, book agents and some others, may remain in their offices longer still.

The Bishop who presides has the duty imposed on him of officially stationing the preachers. We do not call it a *power* or *authority* which may or may not be exercised; but we call it, with our Discipline, a *duty* which *must* be performed by the presiding Bishop, and which he is not at liberty to omit or neglect, except at the expense of his official standing. He must station every preacher in the

conference. He must allow none, except the presiding elders, to remain more than two years successively in the same circuit or station. It is true, he is intrusted, in the performance of his duty, with very great responsibility. For with him is confided the sacred and important deposit of apportioning to their fields of labor the pastors of the flocks. There must be somewhere a power to decide, and in our Church it is intrusted to the Bishops, under the persuasion that this is productive of the greatest amount of spiritual good, especially in an itinerant ministry. It is not necessary that this should be intrusted to one man, as is manifest from the practice of those who place it in the hands of a committee.

Nevertheless, this mode of stationing ministers is according to the wish, or at least the choice, both of the people and preachers, who, for the general good, yield their own abstract rights, and thus mutually adopt a universal plan. The preachers agree to be stationed wherever they can be most useful; and the people, for accomplishing so noble an end, agree to receive such preachers as may be sent them according to this preconceived plan. Both yield their preferences; and both are satisfied: Nor are any sent contrary to their will or choice to any place, because they choose and agree to go to any appointment. Nor do the people receive preachers contrary to their will, for they too resolve to be satisfied with their pastors; and they are, as a whole, better satisfied with this arrangement than they would be with any other. And we have no hesitation in saying that the members of the Methodist Church would never agree to change this for a different method. It is, therefore, a mistake to suppose that either preachers or people are dissatisfied with this mode of supply. Directly the contrary is the case.

The stationing of preachers is not done capriciously or recklessly, but wisely and after the most deliberate con-

sultation. The presiding elders are the counselors, and, indeed, the assistants of the Bishops in making out the appointments. They are intimately acquainted both with the people and preachers, and are, therefore, the most impartial aids that could be found to assist in this matter. The Bishop always stations preachers with the advice of the presiding elders.

Besides, the several circuits and stations have full access to the Bishop and presiding elders, who can represent their cases, and present their petitions or wishes, under the assurance that every thing will be well considered and matured. But so well are the wants of the people attended to, and so well are they pleased with their supplies, that comparatively few petitions for individual preachers are sent to the Bishops. The few, however, that are sent present a great variety of cases, a brief survey of which will, no doubt, be interesting, instructive and satisfactory to the reader. We have now in our possession a considerable number of such petitions sent to Bishop Roberts from circuits, stations, individuals and preachers, which exhibit the work of stationing in a very clear and interesting light.

Some petition for *talented preachers*. A petition before us from the committee of a quarterly meeting conference, states: "We verily believe this to be one of the most important stations within the conference. It contains about three thousand souls, is the centre of the state and the seat of government. It is the residence of many public officers, is resorted to by many strangers of distinction, and has many flourishing schools, whose pupils attend church. We want a minister whose talents would enable him to answer the expectations of those attending his ministry; to meet with promptness and counteract successfully any improper course which our brethren of other denominations may take against us; and to secure the attendance at our church of as many of the non-professors as possible. We

have, therefore, to beg that you will send us one of your most talented preachers. Without detracting from others, we would suggest that brother P., for many reasons, would admirably meet our wants. A sense of duty, in view of doing good, must be our apology for presenting this request. We conclude, by praying that the Spirit of God may preside over all your deliberations."

Another class of petitioners plead for a preacher who is well skilled in promoting the cause of Sunday schools, missions, and the other benevolent and religious operations of the day.

Some again petition for *single preachers*, urging that they are unable to support a man with a family. And these requests are made to an extent that would more than exhaust the number of single men; and the more so, as those generally who petition for them expect the very rare qualifications of aged ministers in the persons of the young men whom they wish to be sent them.

Others petition for the *return* of preachers the second year. Various are the reasons assigned in the petitions presented for this purpose. The improving financial state of the circuit or station is urged for the re-appointment of their former good financier. Others plead the general cause of religion, or the success of the previous year, as a reason for re-appointment.

A good *disciplinarian* is frequently called for, in order to regulate the concerns of the Church, and bring the people back to the strictness of Methodist Discipline, or preserve them in it.

Sometimes after appointments are made at conference, the people are not exactly suited, and they apply to the Bishop to send them another preacher in the place of the one already appointed. This presents one of the most difficult cases within the whole range of appointments. Generally those who ask for the changes are people of

unreasonable demands, who think their claims for superior preachers are more important than those of the whole conference besides. They are also generally more or less petulant. As far as we have been enabled to learn, the changes that have occasionally been made to suit those persons have not been successful in accomplishing the conciliatory object which the Bishop, making the change, had in view. Besides, in almost all cases, even where the people have received cordially the preacher sent them, though they considered that they did not receive their due in ministerial talents, the result has been most happy, so much so that at the conclusion of the year, they have been desirous of having the same preacher re-appointed.

Sometimes petitions are presented from seamen's chapels, and a preacher who has gifts to suit men of nautical pursuits is wanted. In these instances, too, the good judgment both of the Bishop and his advisers is put to the test.

Afflictions on the part of preachers and their families are sometimes urged as reasons for particular appointments. We give extracts from a few letters.

One writes as follows: "From my family circumstances, I deem it to be my duty to make a request in reference to my appointment. My labors for the past year have been in a section of country that is very sickly. My companion, who formerly possessed a sound constitution, has been visited with a severe attack of fever; and, before entirely recovering, she was taken with a relapse, accompanied with a state of derangement. It was thought by some that she would never regain her reason. This, however, she has regained; but not her health. There is, at present, a prospect that if proper means are used, her health also will be restored. Her parents live in the vicinity of this place, with whom she at present resides. I fear I could not devote my time and labors to the service of the Church, if I should have to remove my family from the care of our friends. I

possess but a feeble constitution, yet still I ardently desire to devote my little strength to the best interests of the Church. This I will do most cheerfully if I can receive an appointment convenient to my family, as I should then not have to spend much time in riding to and from my field of labor. It is painful for me thus to make a request of you; as I wish to be submissive to the order of the Church in all things. I shall leave my case in your hands, by barely making known my condition."

Another writes thus: "If I were to consult my own interest, I would say that I could travel F——— H—— circuit, with more convenience than any other, as I have a brother living there, whose house would be my home; but if you should think best to send me to some other part of the work, I will go cheerfully, on condition that I may be enabled to provide comfortably for my family."

An aged minister of great worth sends this petition to the Bishop: "As the interests of my motherless children require my special and personal care and attention, if you, in arranging the appointments, could indulge me with a place in one of the stations, or on the circuit of ——, it would be an accommodation for which I would be thankful. I am not wont to make such requests, and this is my first. I hope it will be excused."

The petitions of the *parents* and *near relatives* of preachers are sometimes urged with great feeling, and indeed much reason, in reference to particular appointments.

The following addressed to Bishop Roberts, is from a member of the Church in behalf of the mother of a preacher: "Since you left us, a subject, not very remote from your matters, has been agitated in my mind, which I thought I would hint to you. It is in relation to brother W. O. L. Sister L., his mother, is in the decline of life; and since the death of Mary Ann, she appears very much distressed. W. O. is her *only* boy, in whom her

heart is bound up. If he could, without any derangement of your affairs, be placed on S—— circuit, so that he could see her occasionally, it would be a great comfort to the old lady.”

The annexed importunate appeal is from the father and mother of a preacher: “By some means, it has got into circulation here, that brother S. has declared that he will use his influence with the present conference to have W. in his district next year. This would be moving him one or two hundred miles at least from us. In our journey to the better world, we have our joys and our sorrows. Under some of our sorrows, all we can do, is to ask for grace to help us to bear them with patience and resignation. Now, as the above declaration, if effected, will add much to the list of our sorrows, and as we view it to be of that kind, under which it would hardly be proper to ask for grace to bear it patiently, we have come to the conclusion to ask for its being withheld, so that we may not be afflicted unnecessarily. First, because we are getting old, and he is our only child. To this you probably may reply that we are opposing our private feelings to the good of the cause at large. We have had this view of the subject under consideration; and conclude we are justified in saying the contrary: for this reason—his object, and the wish of the conference, is, that he should preach. We do not wish him to desist in the least. But you may say, there is a probability of his being more useful where he is not known. We cannot see why this should be the case. On this circuit, he is partially known; and certain we are, that the people would be very glad he should be appointed to labor here. Moreover, our opinion is, that the probability of his being useful here, is not only as great, but far greater than at any place where he is a total stranger. A revival is going on at this time in many parts of the circuit; and we believe we speak the sentiments of many, when we say, he seems peculiarly

adapted to labor in such places. Will you silence us at once, by saying, all these conclusions arise from our overweening fondness? Far from this silencing us; for we feel something within that testifies to the contrary. But we have another reason for wishing him to be sent to this circuit. He is encumbered with a family, and destitute of the means of moving far. This, we think, ought to have considerable weight in making out the appointments of the preachers. For we believe it is pretty generally conceded, that the traveling preachers have a laborious time of it at best, and for which their pay in this life is inadequate, even should they get all that is allowed them. Would it not be adding considerably to their labor, and to the exhausting of their stipend, to send them from one extreme part of the conference to the other? We think it would; and feel a confidence that this point will be duly considered. Should it not be deemed expedient to send him to this circuit, permit us to name M. In sending him to either place, much saving in the article of money would be effected, as I have made some arrangement for the accommodation of his family, being impressed with the hope that he will be appointed to one of the places. The subject is before you, and permit us to ask you not to treat it with indifference. I write under the impression of your presiding in the conference. If you should not, you may hand this to the person that does, and aid our request if you please."

We find the following letter from the Rev. Philip Gatch, and as it is the only letter we have ever seen from his hand we publish it entire, especially as it is very brief. It is dated August 27th, 1829, and addressed to Bishop Roberts: "If consistent with your will and judgment, as you have George under your jurisdiction, I should be pleased if you could give him a station the coming year in one of the neighboring circuits. I am old, and the time of my departure is near at hand, and I should be glad of his company at times,

while I remain in this world. He is my Benjamin; but I have freely given him up to God, and the work of the ministry. I hope you will excuse the liberty I have taken. Peace be with you."

Sometimes a remonstrance is sent to the Bishop to prevent the re-appointment of a preacher the second year, or even to prevent a certain preacher being appointed for the first time. These, too, must be listened to, and the true merits of the objections duly weighed, in order to prevent future difficulties.

Transferring from one conference to another is sometimes one of the difficulties in the way of stationing preachers. Properly, the Bishops, according to Discipline, have the power of transferring from one conference to another, guided, as they are, by their good judgment in this as well as in other matters. When a conference is full, the members very generally are averse to transfers. Some do not wish the transfer among them of those who are called superior preachers, as such may be said to encroach on the privileges that otherwise might be the lot of the leading men of the conference to which the transfer is desired. Others do not want the transfer of preachers below mediocrity, as these are no real acquisition. There is likewise a solitary preacher here and there, who is fond of change, and the importunities of such for transfers have embarrassed the Bishops not unfrequently. To conferences not well supplied, the Bishops transfer without hesitancy; but then the conferences that lose their members, if those members are highly prized, object to giving up their valuable assistance. On these, and several other accounts, there are no small difficulties connected with the transferring of preachers.

The following is a plea of a very influential preacher, claiming the restitution of both the principal and interest of the transfers made from his conference to another. He asks to be refunded on the principles of justice: "It was

known to the Bishop that six or eight of our first men had been removed within three or four years; some to the west, some to New York, some on foreign missions, and some by death. But as he has probably conferred with you on this matter, I need not enlarge. There is one point, however, on which I beg to be heard: it was understood, I believe, when the conference was set off, that we made them a loan of two or three leading men, for the purpose of giving them a start, whom they were to return after a short time, with interest. And now, we want our own. Should they demur on this ground, still we want one or two, at least, of their first men; and I cannot doubt that the general interest requires they should be furnished us. But do not misunderstand me. We want men of the first class, or we should prefer to raise our own supply; for common-place preachers can be had by wholesale within our own limits."

Here is a plea for a transfer in behalf of an aged mother, presented to Bishop Roberts, by the brother of the preacher who desired it: "We have in Baltimore an aged mother, who is poor, and is depending on us, in a great measure, for a support. She has been a member of the Church for upward of thirty years. She has been a kind and pious mother; and it is our duty to take care of her the balance of her days. If my brother were in this conference with me, we could render her last days easy and comfortable. She grieves very much in consequence of the great distance of my brother from her, and is very anxious for him to be transferred. Moreover, she has not had good health for some time; and I am inclined to think that it is owing in part, to my brother's being so far away. At our last conference I spoke to Bishops Hedding and Emory on the subject, and they were perfectly willing for a transfer to be made, and said they would do their best, but were fearful they could not do much, if any thing, as they would not be at the conference. They advised me to speak to some ten

or twelve of the principal preachers, and get their consent, and then write to you. I have taken their advice. Brother Hedding said it was not absolutely necessary to take this course; but he remarked, you might feel a reluctance in making the transfer, not knowing the minds of the preachers of this conference on the subject. I have not had opportunity to see as many of the preachers as I desired, but I have not named it to one who refused to give his cordial consent. All those to whom I have spoken, say he ought to come, on his mother's account; and they told me I was at liberty to use their names in any way I saw proper, in writing to you."

From the foregoing, the reader will perceive the variety and extent of petitions in reference to the appointment of preachers; and though all petitions receive respectful consideration, there are some of them which are rather perplexing than otherwise. When a preacher is asked for by name, and the Bishop does not grant the request, and this is known to the other preachers, as will almost always be the case, then the preacher sent to the appointment will feel much embarrassed, inasmuch as he will look upon himself, more or less, as an intruder. Besides, according to the principles of itinerancy, all preachers agree to serve the Church wherever they are appointed, without any special choice of their own; and all the people, likewise, agree to be thus served. There is, therefore, a mutual *compact* between preachers and people to serve and be served, as the stationing powers shall decide. To ask, then, for special favors on the part of the people or preachers, seems scarcely consistent. If one circuit be peculiarly favored, then another must suffer in order to accommodate. Likewise, if one preacher be peculiarly favored in his appointment, another must endure hardships and privations on the account. The great end aimed at by the mutual concessions of people and preachers is the

general good; and when this can be accomplished and the parties suited, with certain accommodations, all is well.

But the greater portion of both preachers and people are opposed, in general, to preachers asking particular stations for themselves, and, also, to circuits asking particular preachers; because they believe this interferes, more or less, with the vigorous working of the itinerancy, to which our whole Church are passionately attached, in consequence of its manifold beneficial results. It is certainly advantageous to the people; but it is a grievous burden on the ministry, and can never be otherwise.

In our periodicals communications have frequently been published against the practice of petitioning for particular preachers. We give, as a specimen, the annexed document, adopted at the second quarterly conference of Newman circuit, Georgia, in the year 1843, signed by Peyton P. Smith, presiding elder, and B. H. Mitchell, secretary. It was published in the *Southern Christian Advocate*:

“It appearing to the conference, that a very common practice has existed for the last few years, and is becoming more common year after year, for the members of our Church of the various circuits within the bounds of the Georgia annual conference, to send up petitions to said conference, praying the conference would send to them a preacher therein named; and these petitions not only having found their way into said conference from our societies, but from individual members of our Church; and we, the members of said conference, deeming it to be an unintentional and unforeseen, but real encroachment by said societies and individuals upon our itinerant system—a system that we conceive to have been matured when our Church was in its infancy by our fathers—a system that we believe has carried forward the great cause of Methodism to the spiritual joy and comfort of a large portion of the sons of Adam, and the only positive system that can be adopted,

we believe, to proclaim adequately the glad tidings of salvation to a lost and ruined world: therefore,

“*Resolved*, By the members of this conference, that they respectfully suggest to our societies and individual members of this circuit, to abandon the practice of petitioning as aforesaid.

“*Resolved*, That we, the members of this conference, will abandon the practice ourselves of petitioning the conference, upon said subject, as individuals or members of a particular society, believing that the only proper medium through which such request should be made, is the presiding elder.

“*Resolved*, That we will use our influence in love, and with due deference to the opinions of our brethren, to induce them to abandon the practice as aforesaid, and that we will, with them, endeavor cheerfully to receive any preacher that the Bishop presiding at our annual conference, may, for the future, send to preach to us the unsearchable riches of Christ; and that we will endeavor to sustain him both by our prayers and money.

“*Resolved*, That we recommend the adoption of these resolutions by all the quarterly conferences of the various circuits within the bounds of the Georgia annual conference.”

To petition for a particular preacher seems very different from petitioning for one of certain qualifications, and setting forth the reasons for such a request. In the former case, there seems to be an interference, as a general rule, with the privileges of other circuits or stations: in the latter, there appears to be little else than information communicated respecting their spiritual wants. Nevertheless, in most cases, the spiritual wants of all, in every part, will be as well supplied by the usual representation of the presiding elders. Still, some will continue their mode of petitioning; and it would be as improper to reject such

petitions as it would be sometimes to grant them, as granting them would deprive, in many cases, others of their fair and legitimate rights.

The following petition is from the members of a colored Church in Nashville, Tennessee. It prays for the re-appointment of one who had been instrumental in raising them a house of worship: "We, your unworthy servants, desire to be unfeignedly thankful to Almighty God for his favors bestowed on us, and for all the mercies we have received from his bountiful hand. We would not deem it expedient, from the humble sphere and station that we move in, to address you, but for the common salvation bestowed on us through Jesus Christ our Lord. We, as a body, formerly suffered much privation, as to our religious enjoyment, on account of our church being so small; but, through the blessing of God, and the instrumentality of our venerable father, Gwin, we have got a comfortable church erected exclusively for our benefit, for which we owe many thanks to our great and good Master. This, however, has not been done without considerable difficulty. Since our church was erected, our society has increased very much. The blessed work of reformation is still progressing. Last Sabbath was our quarterly meeting, at which time fifteen of our fellow citizens professed to find Jesus precious, making, in all, since our church was built, sixty in number. Our privileges are very small; and, although our great Master, we are sure, can effect great things, yet we are fearful to trust our affairs in the hands of young and inexperienced men: not that we doubt the veracity or piety of such preachers; but we believe that experience, as well as piety, is necessary for a proper discharge of the duties of this station. We would, therefore, pray you, by every sacred feeling of our hearts, if it be consistent, in your estimation, with the interest of the Church, to return our venerable father, Gwin, to us again, that he may comfort those

who mourn in Zion, and proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.”

The annexed petition from Sandusky City will show the interest sometimes manifested in behalf of our Church by many who are not members of it. In accordance with the request of the petitioners, a preacher, the Rev. John Janes, was stationed among them, who returned twenty-six members at the close of the year. The petition is dated August 28, 1828, and signed by C. F. D., S. P., and D. H. T.:

“We, whose names are hereunto subscribed, have been appointed, at a regularly organized town meeting, as a committee to draft and circulate a subscription, to ascertain what would be voluntarily offered for the support of a minister of your order, with instructions, if we were satisfied that the encouragement would justify it, to send to you, as the Superintendent of the Ohio conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, who, we understand, is in possession of the appointing power, a request for a preacher to serve us during the current year. In conformity to the powers vested in us, together with our wish, and, as we most confidently believe, the wish of our fellow citizens, who have united to make this our duty, we forward this as our memorial. We have made our inquiries to such an extent as enables us to say, without hesitation, that should it be thought an object worthy your attention, and, at the same time, should it fall within the limits of your power, to send us a single man for the first year, one who is possessed of full ministerial powers and sufficient talent to attract attention, we could give him such support as would, we doubt not, yield entire satisfaction. Moreover, a fine and ample field of action would here be opened for the employment of his time and talents. Our situation is uncommonly pleasant, being on the borders of and in full view of the beautiful Sandusky Bay. The harbor is the

safest and most accessible on the southern shore of Lake Erie. Our village has already attained a considerable growth, both as to population and commercial interests; and we have encouraging prospects before us. This place is already recognized as a port of entry. We have not, as yet, any denomination efficiently organized in our village; and, of course, we think the present opportunity highly favorable for the establishment of Methodism. Various means have been resorted to by individuals to supply this place with religious instructions; but all have hitherto seemed to be unsuccessful. The circuit preachers have visited us; though, as we apprehend, to little purpose. Ministers of other denominations have, also, occasionally preached here; but our means are not equal to the high pecuniary claims of some of them. At present the popular voice seems to favor Methodism. There has been, for some years, a small society in this place, who have labored under much depression, arising from causes needless to enumerate. In order to encourage this little flock, and open a door for their enlargement, we have deemed it advisable to take our present course in petitioning you. Our village is a great thoroughfare for travelers. Men of distinguished rank, from various parts of our own highly favored country, and also from Europe, often pass and re-pass here during the summer season; and not unfrequently they have to remain over the Sabbath, waiting the arrival of a steamboat. By such we have again and again been asked, 'Have you no place of worship, nor any religious meeting in your village, which, in so many respects, is highly distinguished?' We are under the pain of answering, 'No!' Our citizens are mostly eastern emigrants. Many of them are enterprising and observing men. A clergyman of easy and graceful manners, united with ordinary talents, would, no doubt, be successful. Dogmatism and polemical divinity would, as we

apprehend, at present be of but little use to us. We take the liberty to make these remarks, because we are aware that a word to the wise is sufficient. Your wisdom and experience will enable you to determine whether you can meet our case or not. Please inform us of the result as soon after the close of the conference as is practicable. We would add, if we are sick we have no one to invite to console us in the capacity of a clergyman; if we are called upon in the order of Divine Providence to follow a relative or neighbor to the tomb, we have to close the grave without religious rites; but we forbear. Very respectfully we subscribe ourselves yours in behalf of our fellow citizens."

Petitions from individuals or letters from committees, are liable to considerable objections, as they contain the views merely of individuals or of minorities, and are not, therefore, proper indices of the wants or wishes of the body of the people. Among other regulations, our English brethren adopt the following rules.

No preacher shall return to a circuit where he has been stationed, till he shall have been absent from it *eight* years; and where there are more than two circuits in the same city or town, no preacher shall be so stationed in them as to remain in such city or town for a period exceeding six years in succession.

Quarterly meetings may petition for preachers; and such petitions will receive all due respect. But no private letters concerning stations are considered either proper or in form. Those only are so considered which come from the majorities of regular quarterly meetings. Letters from committees or individuals are not attended to, and consequently the conference is seldom troubled with them.

The aged preachers are provided with circuits before any others.

Particular care is taken that the removals be as limited in

their distance as possible, in order to save time, expense and trouble.

Married preachers are stationed in proportion to the number of Church members; that proportion being, one married preacher to four hundred and fifty members; two where there are nine hundred; and three where there are thirteen hundred and fifty.

The appointment of their editors, book agents, missionary secretaries and tutors in their theological institute, is ordinarily for a term not exceeding six years. If, in the course of the fifth year, the committee that has charge of these departments recommend the re-appointment of any of them, a special committee of the conference considers the matter, and if that committee agree, the conference may re-appoint for a similar term, or a shorter one, as they deem best.

In the American Church, the General conference appoints the editors and book agents, and the missionary secretaries; but the Bishops appoint all others. The just mentioned regulations of our British brethren might not altogether suit our circumstances; still they may be wise rules for their own government.

But why, it may be asked, does the General conference lodge the power of stationing the preachers in the episcopacy? The answer is, because they judged it the very best arrangement that could be made to sustain an efficient itinerant ministry, the object of which is to carry the Gospel of Christ to every part of our diversified continent; and the result has fully proved the superiority of the plan.

To *change, receive and suspend* preachers, forms another of the duties of a Bishop, and is expressed in the Discipline, on the 29th page, in the following words: "In the intervals of the conferences, to change, receive and suspend preachers, as necessity may require, and as the Discipline directs."

For various reasons, it may be necessary to change from one circuit or conference, to another circuit or conference,

in order to supply vacancies, or prevent or remove difficulties which can be remedied by no other means than a change of preachers.

It will be necessary to receive local preachers, to fill up vacancies occasioned by death, affliction or other unavoidable causes, as well as to supply the growing wants of the Church where more laborers are required.

In consequence of accusation, the Bishop, too, may find it necessary sometimes to sit on a case before a committee, when a preacher is suspended from all official duties until the sitting of the next conference. There have, however, been but few instances in which this has been done; and we believe it ought to be avoided by the Bishops, except where it is indispensably requisite; because it unnecessarily involves them in matters which ordinarily do not belong to their office.

Hence, in all these cases, it is only when "necessity may require," that the Bishop will exercise the power intrusted to him. But when he *must* do so, he *must* also proceed as "the Discipline directs." That is, he cannot receive a preacher unless he be regularly licensed or ordained. He cannot suspend, except the committee who sit in the case, first condemn. And all this is limited to the intervals of conferences; for to the conferences particularly the discharge of these duties belongs. The Bishop, therefore, can exercise no arbitrary power in the cases we have mentioned. As far as the Discipline *directs*, he must be guided by its instructions. Where it fails to direct, the necessity of the case or the reason of the thing, must be his guide. A wanton or foolish decision in such cases, would subject the Bishop to scorn; and likewise to the correction of the General conference.

To travel through the Church at large is another duty of the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church. This is explained by "traveling at large among the people," and

by the language of the restrictive regulations which describes it as an "itinerant general superintendency." The General conference has left to the Bishops the making of such an apportionment of the work among themselves as shall, in their judgment, promote the general good. Some of the Bishops and preachers have been in favor of districting the work for four years, each Bishop confining his labors to his particular charge, until the succeeding General conference. Others are for sending the Bishops two by two on episcopal divisions, so that they may be able to visit the people in a greater number of places, and thus become more particularly acquainted with both people and preachers. While the majority probably wish to leave the whole to the discretion of the Bishops themselves. It is certainly impossible now, or will be after next General conference, for each Bishop to visit all the conferences once in four years; and should the present plan be continued, the mere presidency in conferences will be the principal work of Bishops, except long and expensive journeys on the public thoroughfares of travel.

It is made the duty of the Bishops "to oversee the spiritual and temporal concerns of our Church." This implies no more than a general oversight of the whole economy of the Church, so as to ascertain if there be any abuses, and employ their influence to have them remedied according to Discipline. They have no control over the property or funds of the Church, nor can they avail themselves of the least part of either. They are allowed, as other preachers, a bare support for themselves and their families, when they have any; their traveling expenses are also paid. There is no room here for the exercise of arbitrary power, as every thing is to be regulated according to Discipline.

The Bishops too are required "to ordain Bishops, elders and deacons." But they have no power of themselves to ordain without the approval of the presbyteries, and indeed the consent of the people. They cannot ordain a Bishop

until he is first elected as such by the General conference. Neither can they ordain elders or deacons until they are first elected to these offices by an annual conference. The voice of the Christian believers, moreover, is to be heard both in licensing preachers, and in recommending them for the itinerancy, and likewise in recommending local preachers to the annual conferences as fit persons to be elected elders or deacons. They may exercise their power of *suspending* the ordination of a person elected, if objections are made to him, until his case can be farther examined into and fully reviewed and decided upon by the proper tribunal. This is deemed a necessary guard, in order to inquire thoroughly into the validity of the reasons for the person's election, or to examine some point which had previously not come to the knowledge of the presbyterial electors.

It is the duty of a Bishop "to decide all questions of law in an annual conference, subject to the General conference; but in all cases the application of law shall be with the conference." This regulation was made in 1840, and it stands in connection with questions not easily decided. We think that nothing is gained by dissensions between the president of a conference and the conference itself, concerning the lawfulness of putting certain questions to vote. To record a protest, or a different opinion, and then proceed, as had invariably been the practice in Methodist conferences up to the time mentioned, is much better than to hem up a conference by the veto of the Bishop. There seems to us something in the entangled process of vetoing which but ill accords with the unanimity and good feeling that have almost always existed, and do now exist between the Bishops and the conferences. We wish this regulation had never had a place in our Discipline. We should be glad to see it annulled by the next General conference. In this we know Bishop Roberts concurred.

The regulation of the circuits and stations, and the districts, is amongst the duties of the Bishops. He fixes on the size of the districts, and holds a negative on the divisions of circuits and stations. Nevertheless, there is no imperative control exercised in regulating this matter. To prevent uncalled for divisions is the leading design here, as the wishes of the people are by this arrangement met, except when the wishes of one circuit or a proposed circuit infringe on the acknowledged privileges of others.

4. A Bishop is amenable to the General conference, who have power to expel him for improper conduct if they deem it necessary. The Bishops are as responsible as any other preachers in the Church. They are entirely subject to the General conference. In the interval of the conference, "they are subject to be tried by seven elders and two deacons, as prescribed above, for any immorality, or supposed immorality; and may be suspended by two-thirds of these, not only from all public offices, but even from being private members of the society, till the ensuing General conference. This mode subjects the Bishops to a trial before a court of judicature, considerably inferior to that of a yearly conference." (See Discipline with notes, of 1792, page 42.)

At the General conference, the character and administration of each Bishop undergo a strict scrutiny; and should any mistake have been committed, or any mal-administration be ascertained, he is corrected.

Besides, in case of suspension by the nine preachers who sit on his case, he remains in his suspended condition until the coming session of the General conference; and if this body should expel him he has no appeal, as already stated, to any other or higher tribunal.

5. If a Bishop cease from traveling at large among the people, without the consent of the General conference, he shall not exercise his episcopal office thereafter in any

degree. And, indeed, the General conference cannot allow a Bishop to exercise episcopal powers except he itinerates, for so the writer thinks the third restrictive rule is to be interpreted. This rule says: "The General conference shall not change or alter any part or rule of our government, so as to do away episcopacy, or destroy the plan of our itinerant general superintendency." The *office* is an *episcopacy* or *general superintendency*, and the manner of exercising its duties, or filling the office, is by *itinerating*; therefore no Bishop can exist, in a local capacity, in the Methodist Episcopal Church. This episcopacy, or general superintendency, is not to be *done away* with, or *destroyed*, by *changing* or *altering* any part or rule of our government. The General conference must, therefore, elect a sufficient number of Bishops to do their appropriate work of traveling at large. No change whatever that obstructs them in the discharge of their duty can be effected constitutionally by the General conference. Consequently, when Bishops are unable to do efficient service, they ought to be superannuated; and when superannuated they have no more power as Bishops than other superannuated preachers. We insert here the note on this topic from the Discipline with notes of 1792: "The Bishops are obliged to travel till the General conference pronounces them worn out or superannuated; for that certainly is the meaning of the answer to the sixth question of this section. What a restriction! Where is the like in any other episcopal Church? It would be a disgrace to our episcopacy to have Bishops settled on their plantations here and there, evidencing to all the world that, instead of breathing the spirit of their office, they could without remorse *lay down their crown* and bury the most important talents God has given to man! We would rather choose that our episcopacy should be blotted out from the face of the earth, than be spotted with such disgraceful conduct! All the episco-

pal Churches in the world are conscious of the dignity of the episcopal office. The greatest part of them endeavor to preserve this dignity by large salaries, splendid dresses, and other appendages of pomp and splendor. But if an episcopacy has neither the dignity which arises from these worldly trappings, nor that infinitely superior dignity which is the attendant of labor, of suffering and enduring hardship for the cause of Christ, and of a venerable old age, the concluding scene of a life devoted to the service of God, it instantly becomes the disgrace of a Church and the just ridicule of the world!"

CHAPTER IX.

THE GENUINE EPISCOPACY.

THE successionists of various sects, whether Romish, Anglican, or American, take upon them to denounce as invalid the Methodist ministry, in common with all ministers of pastoral or presbyterial ordination, such as Presbyterians, Baptists and Congregationalists. These denouncers and anathematizers connect ordination particularly with Methodist episcopacy. Yet, with Methodists themselves, the relation of ordination to their Bishops is a mere accident; inasmuch as they consider that ordination to the ministry belongs to the whole Church, particularly to the believers or pious, and to the ordinary pastors who feed the flocks. Still, as the subject of ordination is connected, if not in essence, yet in other respects, with Methodist Bishops, it may not be amiss, in writing the life of one of our Bishops, to give some reasons for our conduct in rejecting the modes of ordination adopted by successionists, whether of Rome, of England, or their imitators in America. To our own mind, there are abundant reasons for our rejecting

the unscriptural modes of inducting into the ministry practiced by our denouncers; and we unhesitatingly affirm that the Scriptural grounds on which we base our ordination to the ministry are numerous and strong. In presenting, in a very brief manner, this topic, we shall furnish some preliminary remarks on the general subject, examine the claims of the high pretensions of our opponents, and then give some reasons for our own conduct.

I. We will first make some remarks on succession in general:

1. Mere *local* or *personal* succession cannot be the true mark of the apostolic Church.

We would ask, whom did Christ succeed? And, also, whom did the apostles succeed? In a certain sense, indeed, Christ succeeded Melchisedec, though there was no formal succession of persons or places connecting them. The apostles were the true successors of Aaron and the prophets, because they preserved the true doctrines and faith, and were personally righteous. The Jews boasted of locally and personally succeeding Moses, although they corrupted his doctrines by their traditions, and were unlike him in their practices.

The Scriptures assure us that there may be a succession of persons and places, where there does not exist the true succession of the apostles. There are many apostolic predictions which assert this. Paul addresses the presbyters or bishops of Ephesus thus: "For I know this, that after my departure shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them," Acts xx, 29, 30. And Paul says to Timothy, "In the last times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to

abstain from meats," 1 Timothy iv, 1-3. Anti-Christ is predicted as "sitting in the temple of God," 2 Thessalonians ii, 4. So also Peter: "There were also false prophets among the people, as there will be false teachers among you," 2 Peter ii, 1.

Ecclesiastical history abounds with examples, confirming these statements. In the Church of Antioch, Paul of Samosta, the heresiarch, succeeded orthodox bishops. Peter Gnaphæus, the Eutychean, Macarius, the Monothelite, and other heretics, filled the same see. Georgius and Lucius, Arians, Dioscorus, an Eutychean, and Cyrus, a Monothelite, were bishops of the Church of Alexandria, which was planted by the apostles. In the Church of Constantinople, Macedonius, Nestorius and Eutyches, were bishops.

The most ancient fathers place no stress on a mere local succession, apart from the true succession of pure doctrines, and correct moral principles and conduct. Tertullian, Eusebius, Jerome, Augustine and Ambrose, affirm that the doctrines, morals and practices of the apostles are principally to be insisted on, and not a personal or local succession merely.

2. The true succession is designated by the *truth* or sound *doctrine*.

By false doctrines, anti-Christ is to be discovered. St. John, in his second epistle, is very express on this subject. "For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver, and an anti-Christ. Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the *doctrine* of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the *doctrine* of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any among you, and bring not this *doctrine*, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds," 2 John, 7-11. Mul-

titudes of Scriptural passages could be quoted to show that *truth of doctrine* is inseparable from the true succession. Hence, if the ministers of a Church, instead of truth, teach error; if, instead of declaring and pressing the laws of God, they inculcate precepts prejudicial to and destructive of those laws, how can they be the successors of the apostles and the primitive Christians?

3. The inculcation of sound moral principles, and the enforcement of upright moral conduct among her members, is an indispensable mark of the true Church. A wicked people cannot be God's people. The true Church, therefore, admits none within her pale but those who, in the judgment of charity, possess or are seeking the power of godliness. And so soon as wicked persons are there found to exist, she will separate them from her communion unless they refuse to be reformed. It, therefore, follows that the Church which receives wicked persons into her membership or ministry, or permits them to remain in either, cannot be the true Church, if indeed such a heterogeneous assemblage can be regarded as a Church at all. To sustain this position many passages of Holy Writ might be produced.

4. The true mode and spirit of *worship* is another mark of the apostolic Church. Surely the pure Church cannot foster idolatry within her pale. She can have only one God, and one Mediator. The First and Second Commandments enjoin this true worship; and, moreover, idolatrous worship is everywhere in Scripture denounced in the strongest terms.

5. There are certain classes of men ineligible to the ministry, in consequence of their disability to fill the offices, and therefore their appointment is null and void.

(1.) *The wicked are ineligible to the ministry.* Of this many passages of Scripture testify, and it is needless to quote them here.

No Church is at liberty, knowingly, to authorize a wicked

person to preach the Gospel. Such a one, though ordained by man, is still as unauthorized as he was before his ordination; and no people under heaven ought to receive him as an ambassador of Christ, even though all the ecclesiastical bodies on the face of the earth should have endowed him with all the power they possess; for the simple reason that those bodies have no power to choose improper persons for the ministry. Such persons thus chosen are no more eligible to the ministry than a foreigner or minor is to the Presidency of the United States. Not but that the hypocritical may occasionally "creep unawares" into the ministerial office; but then a vigilant and pious people and ministry can either prevent such persons from entering the sacred work, or detect and expel them when entered, so that the Church will receive little or no damage from that source.

(2.) *Heretics cannot ordain or be ordained to the Christian ministry, or be continued in the exercise of it.* The Scriptures "reject all heretics," 2 Peter ii, 1, especially those that deny the Lord that bought them. The Church can give heretics no authority to preach or administer sacraments or the ordinances of the Church. During the fourth century, the greater part of the Bishops or prelates became Arians, denying the true Godhead of Christ, and the personality and divinity of the Holy Ghost. Nevertheless, the ordinations of these Arians were generally received. And it is probable that nearly all the prelatical ordinations in the world came from Arians. Yet Arians have no commission from Christ, and can give none. All they do is null and void from the beginning, to all intents and purposes. The same remarks will apply to heretics of various other grades besides the Arians.

(3.) *He that is a Simonist, cannot be a minister of Christ.* Simony has been always condemned as a sin of the greatest magnitude, both by general and provincial

councils; and it seems generally conceded, that Simonists cannot be ordained ministers of the Gospel, nor can they ordain others.

To the foregoing views it is objected, first, "That though one Bishop who ordains may be a Simonist, a heretic, or a vicious person, yet the others concerned in the ordination, may not be such." To this we answer, that in the ordination of a Bishop, there is always *one* Bishop who *alone* consecrates. This is the universal language of the rituals. The other Bishops who may be present, or who take part in the ceremony, are rather there as witnesses than as consecrators. The consecration of Bishops, therefore, always depends upon the capability of the *one* Bishop who consecrates, and whenever he is found incompetent, the general rule is that his ordinations are invalid.

It is also objected, secondly, "That Judas continued to possess full episcopal authority, notwithstanding his being a thief, a devil and a traitor; and that therefore a Bishop retains full episcopal authority, however wicked he may be." To this plea, which is nothing less than a plea for sin and unrighteousness, we reply, 1. There is no proof that Judas was a wicked man when he was first put into his office, but the contrary. 2. The office of apostle before our Lord's resurrection was a very limited one. The apostles then performed no ordinations, and exercised no superintendence over any person. When their commission was more fully given, they were to wait at Jerusalem until they should be endowed with power from on high. This was bestowed on the day of Pentecost. 3. There is no proof that Judas performed a single act as an apostle, after he had become a devil, a thief and a traitor. It was only six days before the Passover, on which Christ suffered, that he was first charged with these crimes. It was after this that the devil is said to have entered Judas. His treason followed. There is no proof that he was continued a single

day in his apostleship after his criminal conduct. 4. It is declared that "Judas by transgression fell from his apostleship," Acts i, 25. "And none of them is lost, but the son of perdition," John xvii, 12. He, therefore, fell from his apostleship by sin before he hanged himself.

The conclusion is, that no Bishop or other preacher has any ministerial authority after he becomes a wicked man, but, as a man of this character, he falls from his office by transgression. Hence, all wicked men cease to have ministerial authority when they become wicked.

(4.) *Bad men must, therefore, be rejected from the ministry of Christ, and their people are bound to forsake them.* The New Testament requires us to forsake all who pretend to be ministers, but who are plainly unholy or vicious, and who teach false doctrines. So our Lord declares, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits," &c., Matthew vii, 15-20. Tertullian says, *De Præscrip*, c. 4, "Who are false prophets, but false preachers? Who are false apostles, except those who preach an adulterated Gospel?" Christ says of his sheep, "A stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of a stranger," John x, 5. This establishes the right and duty of forsaking wicked and heretical teachers. Paul exhorts Timothy to withdraw himself from false teachers, 1 Timothy vi, 3-5. To the Thessalonians he says, "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received from us," 2 Thessalonians iii, 6. Again, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrines which ye have learned, and avoid them," Romans xvi, 17. True Christians are taught to separate from a corrupt Church that refuses to be

reformed. "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues," Revelation xviii, 4.

It is, therefore, a plain Scriptural canon to withdraw from the pastoral supervision of wicked, heretical, or Simoniacal clergymen, as well as from wicked laymen.

6. The true minister of Christ must possess proper moral, Christian, and ministerial qualifications. Without these he is ineligible to the minister's office.

(1.) A minister of Christ must be *holy* in his life. The citations given on a future page prove this.

(2.) He must have the *call of God*. The following, among other passages of Scripture, makes it clear that a divine call is requisite: "Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest," Matthew ix, 38.

The Church or its officers do not endow persons with authority to preach the word of God. This is the prerogative of the Head of the Church. The Spirit calls, qualifies the persons called, and blesses their labors. The Church can only *discern* and *recognize* the persons thus called and qualified. Ecclesiastical persons might as well undertake to *bless* the labors of ministers, or bless the people with grace, as to *authorize* those persons to be ministers whom God has not called by his Spirit, and qualified by his gifts and graces. They can *discern*, if they will properly observe the Scriptural marks, those whom God calls. This far they can go, but no farther.

Although the sanction of any Church may not be absolutely necessary to authorize those whom God has truly called and sent; yet the recognition of some Church is necessary to prevent those whom God never called from entering into the ministry—not so much to approve of those whom God has called, as to debar those whom he has not called. The Church discerns and recognizes; and while

she does not authorize properly qualified persons, she yet prevents wolves from entering into the ministry of Christ. No Church can authorize a wicked man or a heretic to preach the Gospel.

(3.) Soundness of *doctrine* is a necessary qualification for the Gospel ministry. St. Paul declares, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other Gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed," Galatians i, 8, 9. The epistles abound with passages warning against teachers of false doctrines.

Paul, in his epistles to Timothy and Titus, lays down the proper Christian and ministerial qualifications which must be possessed by all true ministers. See 1 Timothy iii, 1-7; Titus i, 5-9. In examining these passages, it will be found that twenty-five qualifications are specified as belonging to a Bishop or pastor of a flock. The ministers, Timothy and Titus, and through them the ministers of all ages, are told what qualifications to look for in candidates for the sacred office. Freedom from vice, a good Christian character, and ministerial gifts, are the proper qualifications for the ministry. The following general rules comprise the several qualities contained in the epistles to Timothy and Titus, as referred to above.

Rule 1. A minister must be free from scandalous sins; or, in other words, he must not be a wicked man. He must be free from the following ten sins, and all others of a similar nature. He must be blameless, not given to wine, no striker, not attached to sordid gain, no brawler or contentious person, not covetous, not accused of luxury or riot, not unruly, not self-willed, not soon angry.

Rule 2. The candidate for the ministry must possess, in a good degree, the Christian graces and virtues. He

must, if married, be *the husband of one wife, of good behavior, a lover of hospitality, patient, one that ruleth well his own house, one that hath a good report of those without, a lover of good men, just, holy, temperate.*

Rule 3. He must possess ministerial gifts. He must be sound in doctrine, be apt to teach, and qualified to govern the Church.

No man, therefore, is eligible to the minister's office who is immoral, irreligious, or unqualified to teach. And, hence, the laity have no authority to approve, recommend, or receive persons thus incompetent; the body of elders have no right to elect such; and persons invested with powers of ordaining have no permission to ordain them. Hence, also, the ordination of unqualified or ineligible persons is null and void, and of no authority or validity in the Church of God.

Inference 1. The ordinations of wicked, irreligious or ignorant men, that for ages have been and still are taking place in many parts of the world, are invalid.

Inference 2. If pastors lose their necessary ministerial qualifications, and become vicious, or neglect to exercise their ministry, they forfeit their authority as such, and the Church is bound formally to depose them. Hence, we perceive the great error and sin of those who permit vicious or unqualified pastors to retain their offices, when, according to Scripture, they ought to be deposed. Churches that do not expel the vicious, prove themselves to be corrupt to a very high degree.

The qualifications mentioned above are indispensable to the Christian ministry. Accordingly it is said, *Δει επισκοπον, a bishop MUST be blameless*; or, in other words, *it is NECESSARY OR INDISPENSABLE that a bishop should be blameless. He MUST be a good man—MUST be sound in the faith, be instructed in the truths of the Gospel, and also be apt to teach them. These qualifications are so neces-*

sary, that no human power can dispense with them in the ministers of the Gospel; and when persons of a different character are appointed, their ordination is null. None are allowed in the Church of Christ, to send the wicked to preach righteousness, the profane to deliver precepts on piety, the drunken to give lessons on temperance, or the impure to inculcate holiness. Such a mode of procedure would be unwise; and the accomplishment of such an end would be impossible; for precisely the contrary effect would be produced. Neither can men inexperienced and unpracticed in the religion of Christ, be employed in delivering lessons on experimental religion, or growth in grace, or the Christian virtues of meekness, sobriety, &c. Nor can all the skill of man make a teacher of him who has not first learned, and who has no natural aptitude for teaching. Here, then, is a powerful barrier against the appointment to the ministry of the wicked and inexperienced in religion, or those who are not qualified instructors. Appointments made in opposition to these great Scriptural canons are null and void. In such cases God has given no *permission* or *authority* to ordain; nay, he has expressly *forbidden* the ordination of those just mentioned. It is, therefore, profane and sacrilegious in the people to approve or receive bad or unqualified ministers. True ministers ought not to elect them; and ordainers are met with the prohibition of God against ordaining them. The plain result is, that in all cases where ineligible persons are put into the office of the ministry, their ordinations are null and void.

7. Ordination is the constituting or appointing of ministers to their office. Many confound imposition of hands with ordination, though the terms are of very different acceptation. Imposition of hands is one of the ceremonies used in ordination, and stands in the same relation thereto as reaching the Bible to the candidate, or any usage of that

nature. It is altogether inferior to the proper examination of the candidate's attainments, fasting and prayer.

By *ordination* and *to ordain* is commonly understood, imposition of hands, although the words themselves mean no such thing, in their radical import or their applied sense. *To point out, make, elect, choose, appoint, constitute*, and so on, is the general idea held out by the words employed to designate ordination. There are as many as eight Greek verbs, which are rendered as above, and not one of them conveys the idea of imposition of hands. This, it is believed, the writer has proved in an essay on ordination in the Methodist Magazine for 1839, pp. 1-8.

The following is the state of the question in reference to the imposition of hands in ordaining to the Gospel ministry: 1. In the appointment of apostles, imposition of hands was not used. 2. Neither was it used, as far as we know, with clear certainty, in appointing evangelists. 3. Nor was it in use in ordaining bishops, elders, or pastors. 4. It was used in appointing deacons or servants of the Church, but these were only ministers of tables.

There is certainly no preceptive obligation to practice this ceremony in appointing ministers of the Gospel. There is also the absence of all clear apostolic example. Consequently, there may be Scriptural ordination to the ministry where no imposition of hands is practiced. It is merely of ecclesiastical use, and may be adopted or not, without invalidating or rendering valid ordination to the ministry.

8. As to the ceremonials and form of ordination, as collected from the New Testament, the following very brief outlines will present the most important.

(1.) The person who is a candidate for the ministry of the word, *must be called of God, or be a person eligible to this office.* He must be eligible before he can be appointed; and he must be *called* of God before he can be eligible. And those called are such as are truly qualified

with the endowments, of which mention has been already made.

(2.) *A course of trial or probation is necessary to be observed in ordination.* When it is seen that the person lives blamelessly, acts piously, is qualified to instruct others, and possesses those marks of a divine call already brought to view; and when all these shall have been observed for such a length of time and under such circumstances as prove satisfactorily that the candidate is a proper person to be inducted into the ministry, then he may be formally intrusted with the office.

(3.) *The approbation, election, or recommendation of regular Church members associated with the candidate is an important part of a Scriptural ordination to the ministry.* In the case of Matthias, the disciples chose or appointed two, and presented them as fit persons, either of whom they considered as qualified. The multitude of the disciples, even in the case of the deacons, chose seven and set them before the apostles for their approval. Ananias and the disciples at Damascus were the instruments chosen to guide Paul in his first ministrations. Besides, this is confined to Christians, and to them alone. The choice is not to be *arbitrary*, but according to the Scripture.

(4.) *The election, choice, appointment, or approval of the ministers connected with the candidate, is a Scriptural element of ordination to the ministry.* The eleven apostles were concerned in the appointment of Matthias. Barnabas first, and then the other apostles, received St. Paul, and gave him the right hand of fellowship, when they were assured that he was truly called to the ministry. Even when Paul and Barnabas were appointed to a certain work, the prophets and teachers, under the direction of the Holy Ghost, separated them to the work to which they had been called by the Holy Ghost. Paul and Barnabas ordained elders in every city throughout a portion of Asia.

But they had no right to put improper persons in the ministry. The choice of God must *precede* the selection or recognition of man.

(5.) *The ceremonies or rites to be used in ordination*, embrace, 1. *Naming, numbering, or putting in the list of ministers.* Those whom Christ chose as teachers he selected from the disciples or those that had already received instruction from him, and *called* or *named* them *apostles* or *missionaries*. He then *numbered* or *enrolled* them till he had twelve. Hence, it is said of Judas, that he had been *numbered with the apostles*, Acts i, 17; and of Matthias, that “he was **NUMBERED** with the eleven apostles,” Acts i, 26. 2. *The lot* was appealed to in the case of Matthias. 3. *Fasting* was mostly associated with ordination. 4. *Prayer* was of general use in selecting ministers. 5. *Imposition of hands* is not enjoined in the New Testament, nor of clear Scriptural usage, and may therefore be omitted or used, as reaching the Bible, or any similar practice.

(6.) *The ordainers or consecrators.* This has been the great stumbling-block of those who have made ordination to consist principally in forms; and who have thus employed all their ingenuity to induct the vicious or incompetent into the ministry, or to retain them in it after they had entered. The ordainers, according to Scripture, are, 1. True Christian people electing, approving, testifying or recommending candidates. These are the first actors in ordination. 2. The elders or pastors, electing or choosing proper persons, take a part in ordination. 3. Those delegated by the Church as formal ordainers are actors in ordination. These are presbyters or bishops chosen by the body of presbyters to separate formally those whom the laity recommend, and whom the presbyters elect. Hence, *ordination to the Christian ministry is the joint work of the people, pastors and superintendents of the Church, in which a person*

duly qualified is separated to the work of the ministry in some Scriptural form, accompanied with prayer.

Some kind of form should be used, because, in nearly all the cases mentioned in Scripture with any circumstantiality, a formal process is observed, though obviously simple. Our Lord appointed his apostles by naming and numbering or enrolling them. Matthias was chosen by lot, and then numbered or enrolled. Prayer was always used. In the case of Paul no special form was used, except that he was acknowledged by the other apostles and the Churches, with the common greetings which are due to all Christians and ministers, apart from all ordinations or induction into office. Some forms were generally used; yet the forms did *vary* from each other in those cases recorded in Scripture.

Ordination, in the foregoing definition, is said to be the *joint work* of the people, pastors and special officers of the Church. If the will or judgment of the people is overlooked, there is a great *irregularity* in the ordination, though we would not say the ordination is invalid in such a case, provided the candidate is duly qualified. When special officers, as Bishops or selected elders, are not chosen to ordain, there is a great want of formality and regularity; yet we would not maintain that the ordination of a proper person chosen by the people or elders is therefore invalid. If the body of elders connected with the candidate do not act in the case, then there is at least a serious irregularity, which approaches to an invalidity, or is a real invalidity itself.

But what shall we say to the superstitious views and practices entertained by some persons respecting this ceremony? By them it is considered more in the light of a *charm, spell or incantation*, than a significant rite whereby persons are separated to the ministry. Better, certainly, would it be, not to use it at all, than to pervert it in this manner. In the first book of Discipline, adopted in the

Church of Scotland, by John Knox and others, no imposition of hands was used in ordination. According to the rules of this book, that Church acted for eighteen years. In the second book, the practice was enjoined. Among the Wesleyan Methodists, no imposition of hands, except occasionally, was used until 1836, a space of ninety-seven years; and yet no ordinations on the face of the earth have been more in accordance with Scripture than those of this body. The laying on of hands is a *mere ceremony*, becoming, indeed, if used without superstition, but by no means either necessary or essential for valid ordination to the Christian ministry.

9. Now if the true succession does not consist in a mere local and personal succession of persons and places, but in the retention or reception of the truth—if it includes sound moral principles, and enforces upright moral conduct among Church members, so as to reject the wicked and exclude them entirely from the pale of the Church, and retain only those who, in the judgment of charity and the decisions of the Gospel, bear the marks and produce the fruits of pure religion—if the true mode and spirit of worship, without idolatry, are maintained—if the wicked, heretics or Simonists, are rejected from the ministry, or are forsaken and avoided in consequence of their misdoings—if only those who are holy in their hearts and lives are called of God, and qualified to instruct the people in the ways of truth and righteousness, and are selected for the work of the ministry—we say if these things are so, as they certainly are, and if we apply these principles, clearly drawn from Scripture, in testing the apostolical character of the successionists and exclusionists, we shall find they have very little Scriptural ground to stand upon in upholding their peculiar views, whether they belong to the Popish Church of Rome, the regal or queenish Church of England, or the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States.

And in regard to ordination itself, we shall also find that they are more deficient of Scriptural character than Presbyterian Churches, whether they are Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, Methodists, or any others, if we except the most anarchial and erroneous sects of the two hemispheres. Their principal strength lies in the use of one ceremony, imposition of hands by certain persons, whereas, according to Scripture, this is a small matter compared with those things which are essential.

II. But we will test the claims of the Popish, regal and American exclusionists separately.

The *Church of Rome* claims peculiarly to have descended from the apostles in a direct line of succession, and pronounces all other Churches to be schismatic or heretical. She also claims to be in possession of the doctrines of the apostles and the true ministry.

The supremacy of the Pope is the basis on which the succession is founded. But the Pope was not originally the *fountain* of all jurisdiction, nor do all other bishops derive their authority from his mandate or commission; nor do they act as his commissioners or deputies. The Scripture teaches that ministers receive their commission immediately from God. Speaking of the elders, bishops or pastors of Ephesus, the Scriptures say that the "Holy Ghost had made them bishops to feed the Church of God," Acts xx, 28. Again, "He hath given some to be apostles, some prophets, some pastors and teachers," Ephesians iv, 11. They received their appointment outwardly by the apostles, but their calling was from God, and not from the apostles. The Scriptures call pastors "the ministers of Christ and of God," "the stewards of God," "fellow servants of the apostles." It is true, the Romanists say that "God appoints bishops; but mediately by the Popes." But they can give no proof of this; and until such proof is given, we must act without it.

Nor did the Pope originally possess the choice, ordination and confirmation of bishops. The first ordination after our Lord's ascension was that of Matthias. In this ordination, all the disciples that were there, presented two, and out of these two God himself chose one by determining the lot to fall on Matthias. St. Paul was chosen apostle without any formal ordination of Peter, or any one else. Besides, in every city, elders and bishops were appointed without any special interference of Peter.

In surveying all the appointments or ordinations mentioned in the New Testament, we have no account of Peter taking any special part in them more than other apostles. And we have no Scripture, or early historical testimony, that the Popes, by right or in fact, are to be regarded as the sources of power and jurisdiction in ordaining the clergy.

Besides, we can prove incontestibly the following points :

1. *The succession, through the Popes, is uncertain and cannot be traced out.* The advocates of succession have assigned to the apostles themselves fixed dioceses ; but they have done this without any authority from Scripture or the earliest antiquity. Indeed, it is more than doubtful, that Peter ever was at Rome. The account of the immediate successors of the apostles is very doubtful also. There is no real agreement between Eusebius, Tertullian, Jerome, and the other early fathers on this subject. The confusion here is so great that it seems as if God intended the whole as a mere Babel. Succeeding writers, however, as Nicephorus, Callistus, and Simon the Metaphrast, and other historical tinkers, have taken care to fill all the vacancies left by Eusebius. Thus doubt and uncertainty rest on this succession in its very source and first beginnings.

2. *The succession of the Popes, according to the admissions of Romanist writers themselves, has been frequently interrupted by vacations, schisms, &c.* The succession

has been *interrupted by vacations* in the Popedom on several accounts, which is a proof that the Church can subsist without it. The following are instances:—When Rome was desolated by the Goths, Vandals and Lombards. At times when the Romans would not suffer Popes to live among them. In cases when the Popes, for above seventy years, resided in France: during this period, they were only *titular*, not real bishops of Rome: they were bishops of Avignon, not of Rome. When Popes were introduced by violence, as was often the case. When elections were uncanonical, and therefore null and void. When Popes were deposed, as was sometimes the case, by emperors and general councils.

The *schisms* in the Popedom show the impossibility of tracing this broken line of succession downward from Peter. Some Romanists have reckoned twenty-two schisms, and others twenty-eight, that happened in the Roman see alone; among which the twenty-seventh was the greatest and was of thirty years' duration, occurring between the times of Urban VI and Clement VII. There were also, at the same time, Popes at Rome and France who excommunicated and cursed each other in a shocking manner. It was generally contrived either to depose, banish, or murder one or more of them. The Council of Basil pronounced Eugenius a schismatic, who nevertheless obtained the Popedom. From him have descended other Popes to this day, who as his successors, the successors of a schismatic, have no right according to their own canons, to ordain in the Church. To have succession through all these Popes and anti-popes, through poison, excommunication, &c., would be difficult indeed.

Their doctrine of *intention* renders it uncertain who are truly ordained. The Council of Trent, imitating the Council of Florence, declares as follows: "Whoever shall affirm that when ministers shall perform and confer a sacrament,

it is not necessary that they should have at least the intention to do what the Church does, let him be accursed." (Conc. Trid. Sess. VII, can. 11.) According to this doctrine, it is very uncertain who are and who are not truly ordained ministers. It is impossible, therefore, to trace out a succession with any clearness, which is liable to so many uncertainties in the very act of consecration or appointment.

There is great doubt whether some Popes were ever ordained at all to the ministry. According to the general principles of the Church, no man can be a bishop who has not previously been a presbyter: all others are really no more than laymen. The consecration of a bishop is not ordination to the Christian ministry, but a mere ecclesiastical ceremony. Now, many of the bishops of Rome were no more than laymen at their consecration. They never were, therefore, ordained to the Christian ministry. Consequently they had no Christian orders, and could bestow none.

3. *Many, if not all, of the ordinations of the Popes are null and void by some one of the following causes:*

(1.) *Many Popes were wicked, irreligious or ignorant men, therefore their ordinations were invalid.* 'This was the case with most of the Popes; and the Church of Rome teaches that wicked men may be lawful ministers, and she also largely practices on her doctrine.

She teaches this doctrine officially as infallible. The Council of Trent declares, "Whoever shall affirm that a minister who is in a *state of mortal sin* does not perform or confer a sacrament, although he observes every thing that is essential to the performance and bestowment of it, let him be accursed." (Conc. Trid. Sess. VII, can. 12.) The same council, speaking of absolution, which it calls the power of binding and loosing, says, "Whoever shall affirm that priests, *LIVING IN MORTAL SIN*, have not the power of binding and loosing, let him be accursed.'

(Conc. Trid. Sess. XIV, cap. 9, can. 10.) Observe, the wickedness of the administrator does not arise from an occasional lapse into scandalous sin, or from his being taken by surprise. The minister is supposed to be an *habitual* sinner, as well as a *notorious* one. This is clear from the words of the council, “*in a STATE of mortal sin,*” and “*LIVING in mortal sin.*” This *life and condition, or state*, is that of a flagrant, notorious sinner. *Mortal sins* are mentioned, as fornication, murder, theft, drunkenness, &c., and he may be guilty of them all, and yet his ministrations are deemed valid.

And the *practice* has accorded with the teaching of the Church of Rome, as well in regard to Popes and bishops as the inferior clergy. Many Popes have been guilty of the most heinous and scandalous sins, as Roman Catholic authors testify. Is it credible or possible that such monsters of wickedness can transmit the sacred truths of God with fidelity, or that God would choose them to be his ministers in holy things? Their ministry cannot profit man, nor can it be valid in the sight of God. St. Paul says a bishop or pastor *must* be a man of good moral and Christian character; and none others are allowed to enter or continue in the ministry.

Bellarmino and Baronius tell us, however, that the providence of God is wonderfully manifest in preserving the purity of the Church during the lives of so many wicked Popes. But why call this preserving the Church, when it is destroyed by sin? What, in the meantime, became of the souls of these wicked Popes and of those who followed their example?

Now, if a wicked Pope may still be a good Pope, as Romish authors say, then wicked clergy are considered as good likewise; and, moreover, wicked laymen are also regarded as good Christians, or good Catholics, and are ranked among the *faithful* in the Church of Rome.

(2.) *The ordination of many Popes is null in consequence of their HERESIES, or FALSE DOCTRINES.* Some Popes were heretics, and taught heresy in the sense which the Church of Rome herself understands it. Victor was a Monothelite; Marcellinus was an idolater; Liberius was an Arian; Honorius was a Monothelite. John XXIII denied the immortality of the soul, as the Council of Constance says concerning him. Anastasius was a Nestorian; Vigilius was an Eutychean; Eugenius IV was deposed by the Council of Constance, as a *pertinacious heretic, deviating from the faith—a fide devius, pertinax hæreticus*. Moreover, many Popes have been guilty of *the heresy of Simony*.

Besides, all Popes, since the session of the Council of Trent, and many before that time, were gross heretics, as they believed in purgatory, the merits of good works, transubstantiation, the sacrifice of the mass, and other kindred doctrines; all which are contrary to Scripture. They were also pertinacious heretics, for they persisted in their errors with the greatest obstinacy. Indeed, the whole Popedom is supported by a collection of gross heresies.

(3.) *Some Popes were chosen by SIMONY, and, therefore, by their own rules, could not be Popes, but were heretics and heresiarchs.* Baronius saith, “Such an election or assumption is null.” Indeed, the basest Simony ever practiced is chargeable on the Popes; for they conferred livings on bishops by the worst kind of Simoniacal practices. The Papacy itself was disposed of in this way, and the bishoprics were often exposed to sale, and made articles of traffick. The inference is, that many of the ordinations of Popes and bishops were null in consequence of the Simony practiced in reference to them.

(4.) *The wicked measures employed very often to make Popes render their ordination null and void from the beginning.* The elections of the bishops of Rome, even

before the time of Vitalianus, were scenes of intrigue, contention, violence and blood-shed, and consequently none but wicked men would allow themselves to be chosen by such methods. For about three hundred years the Popes were made by the emperors' mandates. At other times they were put into the Papal chair by the most wicked persons, and the vilest methods.

(5.) *Look at the nullities connected with the ordinations of the Popes, and mark the consequence.* Many of the Popes, in all ages since the establishment of the Popedom, have been utterly ineligible to any ministerial office, in consequence of their wicked lives, and their want of moral qualities; and others have been guilty of the grossest Simony: while others again have ascended the Papal throne by the most unchristian means. Add to this, that all of them for several hundred years were gross heretics, in adopting the corrupt doctrines of the Church of Rome. The inevitable conclusion is, that, according to the principles they themselves lay down, their own ordinations are null and void; and they have no authority, for this and similar reasons, to ordain others. Consequently, Papal ordinations, according to the decisions and requirements of Scripture, are null as a whole; and should any of their clergy be recognized as ministers in Protestant Churches, they must be received on Protestant or Scriptural principles, on the ground of their personal religion, their true ministerial qualifications, their freedom from disqualifying disabilities, and their adherence to Bible doctrines, and not to Papal novelties; and, therefore, those Protestants who have admitted clergymen from the Church of Rome, on the ordination they received in that Church, have admitted them on the score of null ordinations in a corrupt and heretical Church.

4. *The bishops of the Church of Rome are not the successors of the apostles any more than the Popes them-*

selves. The following are the reasons: 1. They propagate new doctrines, either unknown or rejected by the apostolic and primitive Church. 2. They confess that they receive all their power, jurisdiction and dignity from the Pope, whom they acknowledge to be universal bishop and supreme head of the Church. 3. They are unscripturally appointed; as they are not chosen by the body of presbyters or pastors, and by the consent or approbation of the people. 4. Often persons have been put in the bishop's office, utterly unqualified and therefore ineligible. 5. They perform a very small part of the episcopal functions. 6. Many of them lead profane lives, practice an impure celibacy, and are infamous for public scandalous sins. 7. They bind themselves by a wicked and unlawful oath, so that they cannot speak the truth, or act according to the rules of right, if it would be prejudicial to the interests of the Pope.

Now, in reference to the ordinations of Romish bishops, we contend that they are null and void, because they are ineligible to the pastor's office on account of their immoral lives, their want of ministerial qualifications, their heretical doctrines, and the source from which they receive their ordinations, namely, through the Pope of Rome.

5. The common clergy of the Church of Rome do not succeed the pastors of flocks in the apostolic Church. Many of them are utterly ineligible to the minister's office, on account of their sins and incompetency as ministers of the Gospel, and their ordinations are therefore null. All of them are appointed to their ministry, for the most part, by bishops whose own ordinations are null and void. Her clergy, therefore, as such, are not authorized, according to Scripture, to minister in holy things.

6. The people, too, of the Church of Rome are not such as would Scripturally constitute the true Church. Most of them are ignorant and superstitious, and generally of immoral lives. Surely they are not such as the apostles would

recognize as Christians, were they now alive. The great body of them are unfit to belong to any Church.

7. In brief, the *Church of Rome*, as a whole, is corrupt.

Apply one plain Scriptural canon to the Church of Rome, and it would raze her to the very foundation. It is the following: "That wicked men are inadmissible in the capacity of either clergy or laity; and if found in the Church, they must be expelled." This single and undoubted Scriptural rule, if faithfully applied, would lead to the expulsion of the great body of their clergy and laity, from the Pope down to the lowest layman, and would lay their Church waste. Or rather, if we could separate from the indiscriminate crowd of clergy and laity all who are not Scripturally true Christians and ministers, in the judgment of charity, we should find that the flock would be small indeed. And yet the Scripture demands this. Nor can there be a Church without this very disciplinary course. And, indeed, the mass of clergy and laity, called the Church of Rome, are no Church at all, properly and Scripturally speaking, but a promiseuous crowd in which the evil predominates and consequently controls the good.

8. There has been, independently of the Church of Rome, a succession or transmission of Christianity through a purer channel and in a purer state than that which she inculcates. This declaration is susceptible of ample proof, but our limits forbid us to enlarge.

We next proceed to the *Church of England*. This Church has claimed for many years peculiar and almost exclusive privileges, even to the unchurching of her more Scriptural neighbors. She asserts that Bishops are an order of clergy distinct from and superior to elders.

But the general tenor of Scripture is against this High Church claim. The character displayed by our Lord himself on many occasions, and presented for the imitation of his ministers, and also his warnings against all lordly

pretenses, as well as the lessons of humility which he taught, are opposed to prelacy. The example and instructions of the apostles are likewise at variance with the Anglican prelatic scheme.

Bishops and elders, according to the New Testament, are one and the same order of clergy. Compare Acts xx, 17, 28; Phil. i, 1; 1 Tim. iii, 1-5; Titus i, 5, 17, 28; 1 Peter v, 1, 2.

The early doctrine and fundamental principles of the Church of England are at variance with the successionists. Of this the clearest proofs from the standard works of this Church itself, have been furnished by many authors; but in our brief sketch we have not space for their insertion. We will content ourselves with noticing,

1. *In the first place, the prominent defects and irregularities of the Church of England in Church polity, and in reference to ordinations to the ministry.*

We have a number of reasons to offer, which go to show, that notwithstanding the pretense of the English Church, she is, in many respects, deplorably wanting in apostolical character and Scriptural qualities, and that she has several traits not authorized by Scripture, but contrary thereto. We notice the following defects and irregularities:

(1.) *The Church of England is under the absolute dominion of a civil power, the British Parliament.*

Both the *kind* and *degree* of power exercised by the British Parliament over the Church are unwarranted by Scripture.

That a *civil* body should govern the Church of Christ is both unreasonable and unscriptural.

Let us look, for a moment, at the *religious character* of the three component parts of the Parliament, the king or queen, lords and commons. The king is considered a Churchman; but he may cease to be such, as is proved from the changes already made, and which may again occur,

notwithstanding the coronation oath and other guards. Queen Mary was a Romanist; and so was James II. Queen Victoria is said to be a Swedenborgian and also to lean to the Puseyites or Tractarians. The lords spiritual are also Churchmen, but then they are now almost to a man Puseyites, or half Puseyites, or semi-Romanists, or Romanistic, as the reader may please to designate such non-descript religionists. Besides, all the bishops are authoritatively appointed and made by the king or queen. Of the lords temporal, some are Churchmen, some are Presbyterians, some are Dissenters of various kinds, some are Roman Catholics, and others are infidels. Some are wicked men, some are mere moralists, and a few are religious. Moreover, the peers are appointed by the throne, and that to any number, except those who are peers by birth, or the few that are elected by the Scotch nobility. Such is the religious character of the House of Lords. As to the Commons, they too, are composed of conflicting elements, as Churchmen, Presbyterians, Dissenters, Methodists, Roman Catholics, and infidels. Some of them are religious, some are wicked, and others are atheistic. They are also the representatives of the widely diversified parties just mentioned, all of whom, in electing, are influenced, more or less, by their peculiar religious or irreligious sentiments. A large part, therefore, of the supreme ecclesiastical legislature of the Anglican Church is composed of persons of very different creeds from herself, and many of them are possessed of the most determined hostility to her faith, worship, episcopacy, general order, and in short, to almost every thing in which her interests and permanency as a Church are concerned. And what is still more strange, no purely ecclesiastical body in this Church possesses any power to control or hinder in the least degree any changes, however great, that may be made in her creed, discipline, mode of worship, or any thing else. Such is the supreme

ecclesiastical legislature of the Anglican Church. Is it possible that such a body of men can be safe legislators for a religious organization?

Moreover, the *degree* of power claimed and exercised by the Parliament over the Church is enormous. The Parliament has sovereign and uncontrollable authority in ecclesiastical as well as civil affairs; and to such a degree as to be able to *alter the religion of the land*. The Church can be changed in any manner and to any extent possible by the Parliament. It can be changed in its doctrines and discipline, in its rites and ceremonies, in the qualifications of its ministers, and in short, in every thing; and no Church synod can in any degree, control or prevent the changes, however serious they may be.

That the Parliament can change or alter the Church in any possible form, there can be no doubt; because it has been already done in many instances. And who can tell what changes may yet take place in a very short time. Surely such an institution was not reared by the apostles of Christ, who taught that his kingdom was not of this world.

The last shape into which the Anglican Church was molded, after a variety of changes and alterations by the Parliament, was the *regal* form of Church government. It is not *Presbyterial*, because *elders* or *presbyters* have not the chief rule. Nor is it *episcopal*, because *bishops*, deriving their authority from the elders, and accountable to them for its proper exercise, are not highest in office. Nor is it *prelatical*, because prelates have not the chief rule, seeing this belongs to the Parliament and king. It is true, they claim to be episcopal, but in this they are mistaken; for episcopacy proper derives its jurisdiction from the pastors and people. It is also a mistake to call it *prelatical*, as Presbyterians usually denominate the English Church; for the prelates are appointed by the king, and are accountable

to him solely, unless the Parliament interpose, and then the king is a component part of the Parliament. The prelati- cal form of government invests bishops with the power of *jurisdiction* and of *conferring orders*; but the English prelates do not possess either of those powers, as of right belonging to their distinct order of bishops. We know they *profess* and *teach* this doctrine, and attempt to practice accordingly, but this is a mere private opinion. It is not the *principle* which governs. The principle places the jurisdiction in the Parliament and king as the sources of ecclesiastical legislation, and of executive power respectively; for the bishops have their sees under the immediate authority of the king. The *regal* is, therefore, the proper ecclesiastical form of Church government in the Anglican Church, unless the term *Parliamentary* might be deemed better.

(2.) *We object to the Anglican Church having her temporal and spiritual head in the person of the reigning monarch, whether king or queen, and in case of a minor the king's council.* Here, too, as in the case of the Parliament, we object to both the *kind* and *degree* of power vested in the British monarch.

As to the *kind* of power, we have three objections: first, the simple headship; secondly, its being vested in a female; and, thirdly, its exercise by a minor, whether male or female.

Moreover, the *degree* of authority, and the various powers invested in the English monarchs by the supremacy, appear to us quite too large. The king's power, in our apprehension, is altogether without any proper Scripture warrant. He can exercise authority, in matters of faith and discipline, such as was never given to any succession of men by Almighty God since the world began. Those who sat in Moses' seat made no such pretensions. The Pope only, whose successor the English monarch is, can equal him in these matters.

(3.) *Another departure from apostolical character is, the subjection of the Church to the state.* This is an unavoidable consequence, arising from the powers invested in the king and Parliament. The Church cannot call her convocation without the royal mandate, whatever exigence may occur. When assembled, they are under the king's control; and their enactments are of no authority, unless his majesty give them his assent. Now, we would ask, where is there any Scripture authority for this, or is it any way consonant with reason and Scripture?

(4.) *The appointment of bishops by the crown is replete with many evils. This, surely, cannot be viewed either as apostolical or primitive.* In early times, those called bishops were elected by the body of elders over whom they presided, and with the consent of the people whom they served. In the Church of England, the king *nominates, elects and consecrates*; for what he does by his officers, who *must not* resist his will, he does himself. In short, to use the language of the English law, applied to this case, he *makes or creates bishops.*

(5.) *The unnatural alliance of Church and state is another defect in the Church of England.* This junction is injurious to both. The civil powers are embarrassed with religious tests and ecclesiastical encroachments. The Church is loaded with political principles and political ministers in the place of evangelical ones. Thus each receives injury from the alliance. Such was not the form of the Christian Church for several centuries after Christ.

(6.) *In comparing the dignitaries of the English Church with the primitive bishops, we see an amazing contrast.* Indeed, it is difficult to draw the comparison between the opulent, unpreaching prelates of the Anglican Church, and the self-denying and humble apostles, whose

undoubted successors they claim to be. Between them there are very few common traits of character.

(7.) *The worldly character of the clergy.* We ought not to forget that the worldly and political mold into which the English Church was cast in her legislative head, the Parliament; in her executive head, the king; and in her official heads, the bishops, is also seen and felt in her ministers in general. Their pride and luxury, previous to being put to the blush during the last hundred years by their more circumspect neighbors, were truly alarming. And even now they are far from being ensamples to the flock. Look at their sinecures and at those who possess pluralities, and who are, of course, non-residents.

The revenues of the Irish Church are enormous. The twenty-two bishops divide in rents and fines £220,000 per annum. That is, each receives an average income, if this estimate be correct, of £10,000, or nearly \$50,000. The income of the beneficed clergymen of the Irish Church is estimated at £1,500,000, and the average worth of each living is £800, or a little short of \$4,000. And these princely incomes are extorted, in part, from a half-clad and starving Catholic peasantry! And the greater part of this enormous income goes to support pluralists, and other non-resident incumbents, in idleness and luxury.

According to the best calculations, the whole Protestant population does not exceed a *million and a half*, while the Roman Catholics number *six millions and a half*. About one-half of the Protestants are dissenters from the Established Church. Hence, *seven millions* of the Irish, after *voluntarily* supporting their own clergy, are *compelled*, by law, to pay enormous salaries in behalf of the *seven hundred and fifty thousand* Churchmen. But how great will the contrast be, if we compare our English and Irish rectors, vicars, and even curates, with the primitive ministers? How absurd, then, their claims to almost exclusive apos-

tolic *succession* among reformed Churches, and how much more defective in genuine apostolic *character* are they than their neighbors, who make no such pretensions!

(8.) *Besides, their people, as might be expected, are very much like their leaders.* What profaneness and glaring wickedness almost everywhere prevail among all classes of this communion! And where this is not so much the case, and where morality is inculcated and observed, how great is the ignorance of the doctrines of Christianity, and more especially of experimental religion.

(9.) *Her laxity in discipline.* This is another particular in which we think there is an incalculably great lack of primitive excellence in the English Church: she is exceedingly lax in, or almost totally negligent of, Gospel discipline. Her members, in general, are members by birth-right or baptism, and are regenerated, according to their generally received views, in the performance of this rite. No proper conditions are required of those who come into her pale; but any one who thinks fit may attach himself to her communion, however unqualified he may be to bear the Christian name. Besides, as members of the Establishment, there are no proper Christian requirements enjoined and exacted, any more than from others who make no pretensions to religion. Indeed, their Church membership has scarcely any thing more sacred in it than citizenship, or being born in some part of the British dominions.

(10.) It is due to observe, that there are several good things to be found in the English Church, and that she is infinitely better than Popery. One good trait was, that at her organization she rejected Popery as a whole. She gave the word of God to her people, and is aiding in giving it to all lands. She has fostered and promoted learning of every kind, to some degree. There is also a small minority of pious people and ministers within her pale. A glorious revival of religion has grown up within her bosom through

the instrumentality of the Wesleys; and though she has not availed herself of it so as thoroughly to reform herself, both the nation and the world have been the better by this glorious return to Scriptural and primitive Christianity.

We are not, however, of those who believe that the Church of England is either the bulwark of Protestantism, or that, as just stated, she is truly reformed. All the reformation she has undergone, has been a forced impression made in her, first by the Puritans, and lately by the Methodists. But there has no change, in our opinion, for the better taken place in her polity, or in her operations, which promises any radical reformation either of people or ministers, except what has arisen from the source just mentioned, or what has been forced on her from without. Reform her, and she is razed to the ground, like her mother, or elder sister, Rome. Separate all her wicked or unchristian clergy and laity from her pale—then abolish her connection with the state—then give her a Scriptural or apostolical Church polity, whether Episcopal, Presbyterial or Congregational, such as the Free Church of Scotland, or the Independents, or the Methodists have, and the Church of England is no more.

2. We now proceed to show, *secondly*, that the ordinations of the Church of England are either vitiated or null, by their descent from the Church of Rome.

(1.) Allowing, for the sake of the argument, that the orders from the Church of Rome are valid, the orders of the Church of England, derived from Rome, are either greatly vitiated or altogether invalid. This we prove by the following reasons: 1. The Church of Rome, in her ordination, never endowed any man with episcopal authority with the *intention*, that should he leave her, he would carry his authority with him; and without the *intention* in the ordainer, no ordination, according to them, could be valid. Now the intention both of the Church of Rome, and

ordainers in it, with reference to all bishops and other clergy, is, that they should remain in the Church of Rome, exercise their ministry there, and among no others. 2. The English reformers were all excommunicated by the Pope, and, of course, their succession was cut off; especially viewing succession to be uninterrupted, which is the general idea attached to it by its asserters; and surely excommunicated and degraded clergymen are not the persons to ordain others. If it be said the excommunication was unscriptural, and the Church of Rome had no authority thus to excommunicate, we answer, if this be allowed, then she had no authority to *confer orders*; for if she be so far apostate as to be deprived of the power of excommunication, she is also so far apostate as to be deprived of the power of conferring orders. If, by transgression, she fell from the one, she cannot possess the other privilege. And if she could not excommunicate the English Church, and deprive her of her orders, she could not confer orders, and therefore the English Church could receive no orders from her. Such is the true consequence.

(2.) *In many instances, the chain of ordinations, from the Church of Rome to the Church of England, was actually broken.* The English succession was interrupted in the case of Archbishop Parker, who was ordained December 17th, 1559, by bishops who had been deposed in the reign of Mary. The connection between these two Churches was broken in the case of Archbishop Juxon, in 1660 or 1663. In the case of the *non-jurors* too, in 1689, the succession of the Church of England was broken.

(3.) As ordinations in the Church of Rome are generally or altogether invalid, and as such ordinations were received in England from that corrupt Church from the year 668 to the year 1517, of course the ordinations in the Church of England, received from Rome, are themselves generally or altogether invalid.

We will state a few cases in which this absolute nullity appears in the ordinations of British bishops by the Popes.

Plegmund, Archbishop of Canterbury, was ordained in 891, at Rome, by Pope Formosus, who was so notorious for his crimes, that Stephen VI, his successor, at the head of his council, having declared the ordinations of Formosus null, decreed all should be re-ordained whom he had ordained. Sergius III renewed all that Stephen had done against Formosus, and caused his ordinations to be declared null over again. Now Plegmund, Archbishop of Canterbury, was never re-ordained; and yet he ordained most of the bishops in England for twenty-six years. Hence, the ordinations of Plegmund were null; and, of course, run through the ordinations of the English Church down to this day.

Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury, was ordained in 1207, by Pope Innocent III, who deposed John, king of England, and put the kingdom under an interdict for six years.

Boniface, Archbishop of Canterbury, was ordained in 1245, at Lyons, by Pope Innocent IV. This Boniface "used all means, good and bad, to scrape money together, under the pretense of paying the debts of his predecessors; but consumed the whole in war." The Pope was of the same character. When expostulated with for his evil conduct, especially toward England, which he had pillaged by his exactions, he declared, "By Peter and Paul, were it not for our inbred generosity, I would hurl such confusion upon him, that his folly and punishment should astonish the world. What! is not the king of England our vassal? Yea, more, even our bond slave? And cannot we, by a sovereign nod, imprison him, and bind him in his ignominy?"

John Peckham, Archbishop of Canterbury, was ordained in 1278, by Pope Nicholas III. Platina, the Roman Catho-

lic historian, says, "That Nicholas took away by violence the castles of certain noble Romans, and gave them to his own relatives." Hence, to enrich his relatives, he robbed others. Peckham had scarcely arrived in England, when the Pope, his *creator*, as he called him, required a large sum of money from him, namely, four thousand marks. Thus the bishop *bought*, and the Pope *sold*, the bishopric; so that both of them were the successors of Simon Magus; but let any one judge whether they were the successors of Paul.

In the year 1414, Henry Chichley was ordained at Sienna, Archbishop of Canterbury, by Pope Gregory XII. Now this Gregory was one of the three pretenders to the Papacy, and was deposed by the Council of Constance, and John XXIII or XXIV kept the chair. Yet Chichley received his episcopal succession from this Gregory, who was neither true Pope nor true bishop. And Chichley continued to communicate these false orders to the English bishops and archbishops for twenty-nine years, and that too in the fifteenth century.

Either the Popes or the Archbishops of Canterbury consecrated all the Archbishops of York. And these two archbishops contaminated all the bishops of their provinces. The English bishops traded with Rome in Simoniacal traffick. Sometimes those who had purchased bishoprics, were, by a fraudulent clause in a subsequent bull, thrown out of their purchase. It was then sold to a second, and the Pope received double. John of Oxford, Bishop of Winchester, paid six thousand marks to the Pope for his consecration, and the same sum to Jordan, the Pope's chancellor. Greenfield, Archbishop of York, waited two years before he could obtain his confirmation and consecration from the Pope, and then he paid nine thousand five hundred marks for the favor. When Moreton became Archbishop of Canterbury, he compelled his clergy to

enable him to pay to the Pope the cost of his translation to that see, which amounted to fifteen thousand pounds.

The incapacity of some of those lord bishops was ludicrous. When Beaumont was made Bishop of Durham, he was so illiterate that he could not read the document of his consecration. When Thomas Hatfield was ordained, who was a young, trifling fellow, without knowledge, gravity or sincerity, the Pope observed to some who thought he was not fit, "If the king of England had asked me now to make an ass a bishop, I would not have refused him!"

That all bishops were solemnly pledged to Rome before the Reformation, is evident from the use of the *pall* and *episcopal oath* of fidelity to the Pope. These prove the entire subjection of all bishops to him. In a succession of fifty Popes, not one pious man sat on the throne. There had been no Popes for several years together, and at other times two or three at once. Add to this, the Popes and bishops, both wicked and irreligious, bartered with each other most shamefully. From these illegitimate and forbidden sources the Church of England received her ordinations; and as the source is corrupt, the stream must also be corrupt. It would reduce Christianity, indeed, to a low standard to require its heavenly character to undergo a genealogical examen through such ancestors as Popes and apostate bishops up to Christ its divine founder.

3. We notice, *thirdly*, that ordinations in the Church of England are vitiated or null in various ways.

(1.) *According to their own principles, ordination is vitiated in the Church of England by the admission into it of the ordinations of presbyters who had received the same from other presbyters.*

It has been proved by many, (see Powell on Succession, p. 237, New York,) that the early British Church had their ordination through presbyters.

In the times of Elizabeth many presbyters, ordained on

the continent of Europe, were admitted as presbyters in the Church of England.

Many presbyters, from the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, were received into the English Church in the identical relation in which they had stood in the Scotch Church.

Now, these ordinations became incorporated with the ordinations in the English Church; and if they were invalid, then the element of invalidity must run through all the ordinations of the Church of England.

(2.) *The episcopal succession of the Church of England was interrupted in the case of the non-jurors in the year 1689.* For the Church does not derive her succession through bishops or clergy, but through the Parliament and king; and their boast of apostolical succession through bishops is utterly incorrect, because their succession is *regal* succession, through the instrumentality of Popes and prelates, if deemed expedient, but by any other instrumentality of the omnipotent Parliament, and supreme king and queen, if this other instrumentality suits their views or policy better. The case, therefore, of the non-jurors furnishes instance of a breach in the succession of the English Church, by prelates or bishops, from which all the wisdom and learning of her wisest sons can never clear her.

(3.) *The English succession is vitiated by its connection with the state.* The power of the Parliament and king interferes constantly with the proper selections for the ministry, and the supervision of them while in it.

(4.) *It is vitiated by the want of Scriptural regulations concerning ordination and the exercise of the ministerial office.* In selecting ministers, the people have nothing to do. Neither have the presbyters or pastors any voice in the selection. The bishop alone is the sole judge. This remark applies to presbyters and deacons. In the appointment of bishops neither clergy nor people are consulted.

The king alone fixes on the man; except that through a kind of courtesy, he commands another to act as his chaplain in consecrating him.

In the exercise of the ministry, little attention is paid to the manner in which its sacred duties are discharged. Hence pluralities, sinecures, and inefficient or negligent pastoral attention mark the character of the clergy generally. It is true, that some have been roused to more diligence; but this seems to be owing more to the influence of Presbyterian ministers around them, than to any efficient or hearty endeavors in the English Church itself.

(5.) *Ordinations in the Church of England are null or void, in many cases, by being conferred on ineligible persons; or in allowing those persons to continue in the exercise of the ministry after having forfeited their ministerial character.* Multitudes of heretics, Simonists, wicked men, unconverted men, and men without ministerial graces, gifts or usefulness, have been ordained bishops, presbyters and deacons successively in the Church of England. Now, as all such were ineligible to the ministry, no power on earth could ordain them. Hence, their ordinations were null from the beginning, and, as a necessary consequence, nullity adheres to them and their successors.

Besides, many after having forfeited their ministerial character and office, like Judas, by transgression, remain still accredited bishops, priests and deacons of the English Church. Hence, their office is *void* by divine authority, and all such can have no right whatever to minister in holy things.

Thus the ordinations of multitudes in the English Church were null from the beginning; and the authority of others ceased when they became wicked. Hence, the ordinations of all such are invalid, to all intents and purposes, as far as lawful ordainers are concerned. And if any ordained by them are lawful ministers, it is not because they were

ordained by these disabled persons, but for other and better reasons.

Of the foregoing cases, both of nullity from the beginning in ordinations, and of nullity in consequence of the voidance of the office, innumerable instances could be given, did our limits allow it.

Miserable, indeed, must the state of the Christian world be, when a bishop must not be chosen except by a royal mandate and the farcical election of a dean and a chapter. And still more deplorable, when wicked, irreligious and incompetent men are recognized as the ministers of Christ. And yet this is the inevitable dilemma in which the English Church is placed. Her system of succession must sanction all sorts of vice in the clergy and laity; and this it has done to no small extent.

The succession of the *Protestant Episcopal Church* in the United States will claim some attention. Against its assumption, in reference to succession, we present the following objections:

1. *The foundations of this Church, according to the doctrines of successionists, were laid contrary to, or without ecclesiastical rule.*

At the American Revolution, the connection between the colonies and the Bishop of London, their diocesan, was dissolved, and with it was dissolved the English Church in America. By this dissolution, the English Church in this country lost its supreme legislative council, the British Parliament. It lost also its supreme head, the English monarch. It was also deprived of its bishop. In short, it was no Church according to their principles. From 1783 to 1787, they had no bishop, except Mr. Seabury, a part of the time, and his authority was confined to Connecticut. It was no earlier than 1789 that they were properly organized as a Church, according to their own principles, and yet the chief acts of their organization took place before their

bishops were acknowledged to be in the full exercise of their episcopal powers.

According to the acknowledged principles of Protestant Episcopalians, nothing should have been done toward organizing the Church until the episcopacy was obtained. Agreeably to this, the Convention of New Jersey, petitioning the General Convention, May 9th, 1786, declare, that "they doubt the right of any order or orders of men in an Episcopal Church, without a bishop, to make any alterations, not warranted by immediate necessity, especially such as not only go to the mode of its worship, but also to its doctrines." (See Memoirs of Prot. Ep. Church, p. 358.) But in opposition to this opinion, the doctrines were certainly touched, rites and ceremonies also were altered, and, indeed, the general constitution of this Church was essentially changed before any bishop was admitted into their deliberations. For they lost their supreme ecclesiastical council, the Parliament, and substituted in its place a very different constitutional standard. They lost their supreme head, too, and put none in his place; and though this change was for the better, yet still it *was a change*, and of a vital character. It was no sooner than 1789 that bishops first began to participate in the government of the Church; and before this it had been materially altered from the Church of England.

2. *The English Church appears to us to have communicated to the Church in America an ordination, unsound, defective and unscriptural.* We object to this ordination on account of,

(1.) *The character of the supreme power that granted it*, that is, the British Parliament, composed of lords spiritual and lords temporal, in one house, and of the commons, in the other. The lay members are made up of Church of England men, Dissenters, Roman Catholics and infidels. The Parliament is a civil head, and a foreign power. That

the Church of Christ should have its constitution so formed as to depend on an act of the legislature for authorizing ministers of the Church to officiate in holy things, is absurd. The English prelates could not act without the authority of Parliament; and the Episcopal Church in America could not be apostolically constituted till the British prelates would transmit the power of the keys to them. Thus the American Church is forced to trace up her power to the British Parliament—which the discerning and judicious will not think the most likely source of apostolic powers.

(2.) Our next objection is, *that the power of ordination is principally vested in the king by the Parliament, and derived from him to the American bishops.* This appears obvious, from the king's license being requisite before any person can be ordained. Accordingly, a license was first granted by the king, before Bishops White and Provost could be ordained, and this license declares that the American bishops derived their authority and power from him. This is expressed in the act, and the forenamed letter of ordination as borrowed from it, in the following terms: "Provided always, that no persons shall be consecrated bishops in the manner herein provided, until the Archbishop of Canterbury or the Archbishop of York, for the time being, shall have first applied for and obtained his majesty's license, by warrant under his royal signet and sign manual, authorizing and empowering him to perform such consecration." Here the king *authorized* and *empowered* the Archbishop of Canterbury to ordain Bishops White and Provost. It will require some stretch of our faith to believe this to be truly apostolic. Certainly the apostles must have been in very straitened circumstances if they were under the necessity of having recourse to this method. That the change of time and circumstances has made this a justifiable case, will not be easily believed by any person of sober reflection. And however prudence and peculiar

circumstances may allow of good men to submit to such usages, this can never make the thing right in itself, and it ought to teach a little moderation, at least, to those who have had recourse to such methods for the purpose of obtaining their ministry and of establishing their Church. Such ought to be slow in condemning their fellow Christians, who think that the authority of no king or Pope under heaven is necessary to authorize duly qualified men to preach the Gospel and administer the sacraments.

(3.) We object, furthermore, to *the defective and unscriptural ordination received by the American Church from the English bishops*. No persons deriving their ordination from this source can exercise their ministerial character in any part of his British majesty's dominions. The act of Parliament states, and the letters of ordination received by the American bishops copy the act, under which they and their successors have proceeded up to this time, "that neither he (Bishop White) nor any person or persons deriving their consecration from or under him, nor any person or persons admitted to the order of deacon or priest by him or his successors, shall be enabled to exercise his or their respective office or offices within his majesty's dominions." How very defective is this ordination, and how contrary to the commission which Christ gave to his apostles! This extended to the whole world, "preach the Gospel to every creature." But the other gives them no authority to preach in his British majesty's dominions. In the primitive Church, wherever the providence of God cast the minister's lot, there he was authorized to exercise his ministry. It is true this may be called nothing more than a political restraint, lest the Church of England should be affected by the interference of foreign clergy. But has it come to pass that the true Church of Christ, apostolically descended too, should allow Cæsar to curtail the original commission with which Christ empowered his ministers?

Did the first preachers of Christ, does any other Church than the Protestant Episcopal, cordially receive and tamely submit to such a curtailment of Christ's commission? Not one, whether Popish, Protestant, or Oriental.

As ministers of the Church in question cannot officiate in Canada, in Britain, in the East or West Indies, they would certainly be entirely disqualified to be sent to any of these parts, were their services needed. The English Parliament and bishops did certainly *keep back a part*, when they granted ordination to the American bishops. And still they appear to follow the same course. Indeed they could not do otherwise, unless the Parliament should revoke their act and make a new one. When Bishop Chase, of Ohio, visited England, a few years since, he was not permitted to preach or perform any part of Divine service in any church in that kingdom. The same thing happens when any other visits that country. When Bishop Hobart visited Europe, although he performed Divine service at Rome, in the British consul's chapel, he was not privileged to do so in England. When Bishop M'Ilvaine recently visited England, he was not privileged to exercise, as a preacher or minister, in any of the churches. Even when he spent the Sabbath at an obscure country church, he was not allowed to take any part in the public worship as a minister; for, though he exhorted in a gentleman's kitchen on Sabbath evening, where he spent the night, this was only doing what a layman might do, and as the Methodist gentleman at whose house he staid, was in the habit of doing regularly on the Sabbath evening, to those who attended with his servants and family in the place just mentioned. A clergyman ordained here is not permitted to enjoy a benefice in England, and seems to be viewed in the same light that other dissenters from the Church of England are viewed.

(4.) We remark, in the next place, that *the ordination*

of the Protestant Episcopal Church contains an element which destroys its validity. The element is that just referred to, namely, that no clergyman of any order in this Church can exercise his ministry in any place under the British government. Indeed should any part of the United States come under the British government, then every minister of the Protestant Episcopal Church within these bounds would be deprived of his ministry the moment the transfer took place. Their ordination, under such circumstances, would become null and void; and under its authority a man would have to submit to a re-ordination, or abandon the ministry altogether. Were one of their ministers to emigrate to Canada or to Britain, he must be re-ordained, or pass into the ranks of laymen. There is nothing which more completely proves invalidity, than the necessity of re-ordination. This Church herself has settled this point; for when Methodist or Presbyterian ministers join their Church, they re-ordain them, because they deem their ordination invalid. We do not say that the English bishops pronounce the ordination of the Protestant Episcopal Church invalid; but they have, nevertheless, conferred an invalid ministry on them, and treat them as they do other dissenters. Still the American Church has the greater sin, in their reception of an ordination that contained the element of its own nullity.

3. *The American Church does not derive her episcopacy from England alone, but in part from the non-juring bishops of Scotland.* These ordained Bishop Seabury in the year 1784, who was admitted as a regular bishop in 1789, and of course the validity of his ordination was thereby acknowledged.

On the ground assumed by the Protestant Episcopal Church, we may properly object against them, the admission of ordination by the *non-jurors*, because, 1. The ordinations of non-jurors were not acknowledged by the

Church of England, and, therefore, agreeably to the notion of succession, they are invalid. 2. Still Bishop Seabury was admitted into the American episcopacy, and indeed was the first bishop in it. 3. Although the American Episcopalians did not seem to allow his ordination to be valid, they, notwithstanding, received it as valid, for prudential reasons no doubt. 4. Here is an evident mixture of the alledged true succession with an excommunicated sect, thereby furnishing a proof of the folly of maintaining this succession.

There is abundant proof that the ordination of Bishop Seabury was properly viewed by the great body of the English and Protestant Episcopal Churches as invalid, or, at best, as irregular. In the convention at Philadelphia, in 1786, the question of the Scottish Episcopacy was warmly contested. Its irregularity, and even invalidity, were maintained vigorously by some, but the subject was suppressed. Bishop Provost denied the validity of Bishop Seabury's ordination, and continued his opposition till he found it entirely useless or imprudent to do so any longer. Although the Archbishop of Canterbury spoke with great caution on this point, he certainly did not consider this line of the succession as regular. In short, the great body of Protestant Episcopalians were unwilling to risk the descent of the non-juring sect; and the reception of Bishop Seabury was waived, until the fear of division led them to admit of his ordination as valid. It is, however, to be remarked, that since the organization of the Protestant Episcopal Church, the laws against the Scottish bishops have been repealed, and they have been received into fellowship with the English Church. But this does not alter the case, as they were under the ban of suspension or deprivation, when the American succession was derived from them.

4. If there can be no valid ordination without the succession in question, then certainly, baptism, which is a

proper act of the ministry, must be invalid unless performed by a person rightly descended from apostolic ancestors. But this alone would overturn the succession. For, on the principles of Protestant Episcopalians, a man cannot be accounted a Christian who is not baptized; and not to be baptized by a properly authorized minister, is the same as not to be baptized at all, or to be no Christian. Now bishops and clergymen in the Protestant Episcopal Church were baptized by non-episcopal ministers, and therefore they were unbaptized in reality; and, consequently, they are no Christians, and therefore no ministers.

5. *Although, in the judgment of charity, the various objections brought against the ordination of the Protestant Episcopal Church, prove it to be defective and irregular, and in some respects invalid; yet, according to their own principles, these defects and irregularities prove their ordination to be entirely invalid.* Their episcopacy is a commixture of the English Church and the Scotch non-jurors. It is the most defective of any in the whole Christian world, in consequence of the anti-Scriptural limitation which is an elementary part of its composition. This is a perfect anomaly in the Christian world, and cannot be reconciled with Scripture. The English Parliament would give nothing but a limited commission. The English monarch, as head of the Church, could *authorize* and *empower* the English bishops to do no more than the act of Parliament enjoined. And as to the English prelates, who ordained the first American bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church, they could confer no orders of themselves, except in the manner they were directed to do, by the Parliament, and licensed to do by the special permission of the king. The various expedients employed to obtain the succession, throw a veil over its character which creates suspicion. Recourse is had to the English bishops, but they could do nothing. Then the Parliament is to be

supplicated, and the head of the English Church must be reconciled to the measure. Then the almost defunct non-juring line forms the *first* and *principal* part of the American succession. Indeed, some say, that certain bishops of the Church of Rome were applied to while matters were pending. And, moreover, serious steps were taken to obtain it from Denmark. But the non-jurors acted more promptly than all others; and it is probable, that the action of the British government was hastened, in order to counteract the influence of even the obscure non-jurors of Scotland. The heart of an unsophisticated Christian sickens at such superstition.

We will conclude our remarks on the Protestant Episcopal Church, by observing, that were its members and ministers content with pluming themselves on account of their imagined succession, we would leave them in possession of their self-complaisance. But when they denounce and declare invalid the ministry of Presbyterians, Baptists, and Methodists, and profanely have recourse to re-ordination when ministers of these Churches join their communion—when they pronounce as invalid the ministrations of men more regularly and more Scripturally inducted into the ministry than themselves—when they, with Popish exclusiveness, call themselves **THE CHURCH**, and deign to yield only the name of *societies*, *communions*, &c., to the well organized Churches of their neighbors—when they place others in the same class with heathens, leaving them to the uncovenanted mercies of God—when such high pretensions as these are assumed, it is necessary for us to say in reply, wherever else regular ordination can be found, it does not exist within the pale of the Protestant Episcopal Church. It is true, the courtesy of others has recognized the validity of their ordination, rejecting or overlooking their trifling or superstitious usages concerning order. But were we to institute a comparison between the ordination

of this Church on the one hand, and that of the Presbyterians or Methodists on the other, we should find the most material points of the comparison would be against the former, and in favor of the latter.

III. The claims of Methodists to the character of an apostolical Church, demand a few pages of our work.

The great principle of Methodism, like primitive Christianity, is *to do good* to the souls and bodies of men; for the accomplishment of which every thing else is subordinate. The original design of Methodism was not to form a new Church, or a new party in the Church of England, but to reform the nation, and particularly the Church, and also to spread Scriptural holiness over the land. Yet the Church of England refused to be reformed then; and for more than one hundred years she has withstood, as far as she possibly could, the influence of Methodism; and, therefore, in the place of becoming thoroughly reformed, she has, as already stated, manifested no more improvement than what has actually been forced upon her. When, therefore, Methodism, which is nothing else than pure Scriptural Christianity, could not properly reform the Church, it reverted to first and Scriptural principles, in doctrines, morals and Christian institutions. Archdeacon Paley, in his *view of the Evidences of Christianity*, declares, concerning the primitive Christians, that “perhaps their mode of life, in its form and habit, was not very unlike the *Unitas Fratrum*, or modern Methodists.”

In proof that the ordination in the Methodist Episcopal Church is Scriptural and valid, we will proceed to show briefly, that the preachers, in connection with Mr. Wesley, when the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized, in 1784, possessed *the qualifications, exercised the powers, performed the duties, met with the success of Gospel ministers, and were Scripturally inducted into their office.*

1. *The Methodist preachers possessed the qualifications of Gospel ministers*; because, 1. None that were known to be wicked, immoral, or irreligious were admitted into any of the grades by which they could become ministers. 2. In candidates for the ministry, unequivocal marks of piety and experimental religion were required in all cases as indispensable qualifications; and persons of undecided or doubtful piety were rejected. 3. Aptness to teach was required, and also necessary attainments in knowledge, especially in divinity, as well as a constant pursuit after knowledge during life. 4. In short, the qualifications required by the following passages of Scripture, were always and are now looked for in every itinerant preacher: 1 Tim. iii, 2-13; Titus 1, 6-10. 5. To demand from the ministry generally collegiate qualifications, is neither Scriptural, primitive, necessary, nor desirable; because (1.) It shuts many men of the very best qualifications out of the ministry. (2.) It is the means of admitting many with altogether inadequate qualifications. (3.) It tends to substitute the less necessary for the indispensable qualifications.

2. *The Methodist preachers exercised the powers of ministers of the Gospel.* 1. They preached the Gospel. 2. They presided in the assemblies of the people. 3. They exercised discipline, by admitting persons into the Church, excluding the unruly, &c. 4. They were presbyters or pastors who fed the flock.

3. *The Methodist preachers performed the duties of ministers of the Gospel.*

The truth of this declaration is obvious to any who know what the duties of Methodist preachers are. Look at the twelve rules that are laid down to guide all who are admitted into the Methodist ministry; and also the regulations which point out the *duties* of preachers.

4. *Methodist preachers, both in Europe and America, before the formal organization of the Methodist Episco-*

pal Church in 1784, as well as after, were Scripturally appointed or ordained to the ministry.

Mr. Wesley was once a High Churchman, but on mature consideration renounced his principles as such. In 1746, by reading Lord King's celebrated work, he became convinced that elders and bishops were the same order of clergy in the primitive Church. In 1784, just thirty-eight years afterward, he avows the same opinion in his letter to the American Methodists, and he practiced on it, and also died in its belief.

Mr. Wesley considered himself a Scriptural bishop, and was also considered such by his preachers and people.

He also regarded his preachers as Scriptural presbyters; for they possessed the qualifications, exercised the powers and performed the duties of such. Yet, for the sake of peace, these powers in some respects, were, for a time, suspended.

The Wesleyan Methodist preachers were set apart or ordained to the sacred ministry; though, for the most part, without imposition of hands, which is only a *circumstance*, and cannot enter into the *essence* of ordination. The following leading parts, necessary to a Scriptural ordination, were embraced in the Wesleyan connection: 1. Improper persons were rejected. 2. Those duly qualified were chosen. And this was done, 3. By the *recommendation* of the people. 4. By the *election* of the body of elders, presbyters, preachers, or pastors, who fed the flocks. 5. After a *proper trial*. 6. And by a *formal admission* into the pastoral office; sometimes with, and sometimes without imposition of hands. We insist, therefore, that the appointment of Wesleyan preachers, with or without imposition of hands, was a *Scriptural ordination*.

Ordination in the Methodist Episcopal Church will now deserve some notice.

The Methodist societies or rather Church, in the United

States, in consequence of their entire *separation* from the English Church, not by their deed, but by the deed of that Church, applied to Mr. Wesley to provide for them, according to his best judgment, a plan of government and Church officers. He accordingly complied with their wishes, and provided for them in the way he judged best and most Scriptural. The plan is well known, and need not be repeated. We observe,

1. Mr. Wesley was *the acknowledged bishop, overseer, superintendent or chief presbyter*, in the whole Wesleyan connection, both in England and America. There was no individual, or body of men, to whom the American Methodists could look for assistance and counsel, beyond themselves, but to the British conference and Mr. Wesley. The Bishop of London, in whose charge America was, refused to act; nor, indeed, could he act in the case. He refused to ordain for the Protestant Episcopal Church, inasmuch as he could not ordain for them until Parliament gave the authority. The American Methodists could not apply to the Bishop of London without suffering a defeat, just as Mr. Wesley, Mr. Seabury, and Messrs. White and Provost had done. And to whom could the Methodists look for aid in the United States? They could not apply to the Protestant Episcopal Church; because, 1. It was not in existence. 2. It was as great a deviation from the Church of England as Methodism was, whether in Britain or the United States. 3. The ordination of the Protestant Episcopal Church was, (1.) Null and defective in itself. (2.) It had *originated* in a wrong source, the Parliament. (3.) It was *executed* by the wrong ecclesiastic, namely, the king. (4.) And it was *administered* by persons unscripturally appointed, the bishops of England, who were made by the king, without the consent of the presbyters or people.

2. The American Methodists, both preachers and people,

earnestly requested Mr. Wesley to provide for them, not only in regard to the appointment of ministers, but in the peculiar organization of their Church.

3. The acts of Mr. Wesley, in this case, were duly recognized by the American preachers and people.

4. The American Methodists, as a body, have subsequently followed Scripture, and the primitive Church under the guidance of Scripture.

5. Mr. Wesley was *providentially*, *Scripturally* and *ecclesiastically* called to ordain for the American Methodists.

He was *providentially* called to this work, as the *father* and *builder* up of the Methodist societies. He was qualified for the work. And all the circumstances of the case pointed him out, and no other, as the suitable person to be the leading agent in the work.

He was *Scripturally* appointed, inasmuch as he possessed all the Scriptural qualifications for such a work. He followed Scripture throughout the whole; though his course was frequently in opposition to the provisions of the Parliamentary Church of England.

He was *ecclesiastically* called to this episcopal work. He was a presbyter, and, therefore, of the same rank as bishops, with regard to order. He was chosen or recognized as bishop, overseer, or chief presbyter, by the body of pastors and people for whom he acted. - He invaded the rights of no bishop, body of presbyters, or body of people. He was, therefore, called to act in accordance with Scriptural, ecclesiastical rule: not, however, for the Church of England, and consequently he did not operate for them. It is out of place for Churchmen to object against us the want of ecclesiastical order; because, 1. They have little or no ecclesiastical order among themselves; for they cannot call the Parliament a Scriptural, ecclesiastical synod, neither the supremacy of the king, nor the appointment of their bish-

ops Scriptural regulations. 2. The Methodists followed Scripture.

The position can, therefore, be amply sustained, that Mr. Wesley was providentially, Scripturally and ecclesiastically called upon to ordain for the American Methodists. His ordination of Dr. Coke and others, was rather a deviation from modern practice than from the usage of the primitive Church.

It is objected, "that it was absurd for Mr. Wesley, as a presbyter, to ordain a bishop." To this we reply, 1. That bishops and elders, or presbyters, according to Scripture, are of the same order. 2. Mr. Wesley never did ordain *such bishops* as our objectors call by this name, neither did he even approve of them. Indeed, he preferred to be called by any ignominious name rather than a European or British bishop.

It is also objected, "that it was absurd for Mr. Wesley, as a clergyman in the Church of England, to ordain in any form, without formally separating from that Church, and formally disavowing her authority." We explain this as follows:

The Church of England had no discipline to bear on Mr. Wesley's case, or they had not virtue enough to exercise it, or perhaps both together; as Mr. Wesley attended to the order of the Church with more punctuality than most of her ministers. If they had no discipline to bear on his case, then he could not break their laws, as they did not exist; and they, as a Church, have little claims to apostolicity, when schismatics, like Mr. Wesley and the Methodists, were permitted to live and die within her very pale without censure or expulsion. If they had a discipline, but had not vigilance or virtue enough to enforce it, then they permitted the sacred walls of the Church to be broken down, and were not, therefore, the proper successors of apostles and primitive Christians. Those of the clergy

and people who had any regard for religion would not interfere with the Methodists. The worldly interests of the others were not molested, because the Methodists left them in possession of their benefices. Besides, Mr. Wesley was no ordinary man to meet in controversy or Church process. The sturdiest sons of the English Church quailed under the weight of his arguments and the spirit with which he spake. They, therefore, could not meet him, seeing he had Scripture, truth, righteousness, antiquity, unremitting industry, and powerful coadjutors, on his side.

The Methodists in America, by renouncing the Church of England and the Protestant Episcopal Church, did not depart from the principles and discipline of the New Testament. They only rejected unscriptural principles and polity. In the disciplinary regulations which they adopted, they simply received the pure principles of Church polity, and nothing else, such as the following: that wicked persons are not to be admitted as members of the Church of Christ, or continued in it; that wicked men are not eligible to the ministerial office; that ministers should be experimentally and practically pious or religious; that they should possess ministerial qualifications; that the precepts of holy living are to be enjoined and enforced on Church members; that the pious ought to have the privilege of approval or recommendation of their spiritual pastors; and that the body of presbyters possess the supreme ecclesiastical power to regulate Church matters, according to Scripture, whether that power be inherent in their office or received from the people, or both. These and kindred principles the Methodists have adopted from holy Scripture; and they have carried them out practically in their excellent discipline, both in Europe and America.

CHAPTER X.

REMOVAL TO INDIANA

IN the two preceding chapters, we have noticed the character, duties, and labors of a Methodist Bishop, as well as his Scriptural claims to the office of superintendent or overseer in the Church of God. The succession in general was also considered, and the exclusive claims of the Popish, Anglican and American prelates examined, and shown to be unsound and inconsistent in themselves, unauthorized by the word of God, and injurious to the welfare of the Christian Church, producing tyranny, forming causes of schism, and countenancing heresies and unsound moral discipline. It was also seen that Methodist episcopacy, or superintendency, is quite a different thing from Popish or Anglican prelacy, or the heterogeneous admixture of the so called episcopacy of the Protestant Episcopal Church. We showed, likewise, that episcopacy and prelacy are essentially different in their origin, authority, duties and consequences. We shall now proceed with our narrative, and consider Bishop Roberts in the discharge of his duties as a Superintendent in the Methodist Episcopal Church.

When appointed to any office, he prayed frequently and fervently to Almighty God for direction, and for grace to guide and aid him. On his election to the episcopacy, he was greatly perplexed, as already stated, but by the timely counsel of his early instructor, the Rev. James Quinn, and in answer to devout and submissive prayer, his mind was relieved, and he consented to enter on the onerous duties of the office, great as the cross was, and to endeavor to discharge those duties, though it might be with fear and trembling. It was his peculiar temperament, to pursue with steady and untiring perseverance whatever he undertook, without even the appearance of zeal, or any movement

that would create the least noise, or attract the gaze of public attention to his course. He was always silent, except when compelled to speak; he was in the rear and shade, except when thrust out into observation; he preferred every person to himself, except when his official duties required him, as by a kind of necessity, to become leader and take the seat of office.

On his return to Philadelphia, after the session of the General conference at Baltimore, in May, 1816, where he was elected and ordained Bishop, Mrs. Roberts inquired of him what course he intended pursuing with regard to her. He replied, that she might choose one of three things: either reside in Philadelphia or east of the mountains, or else travel with him, or, lastly, reside at Shenango on their own farm. It was necessary that these three propositions should be prayerfully and mutually considered. Although addressed to her with the intention of leaving her to her own choice, yet the interests of the Church, involved in the decision, called for the most deliberate examination and conclusion of both of them.

The first question was, shall we reside in Philadelphia, or east of the mountains? Here the subject of pecuniary resources came up. Bishops Asbury, M'Kendree, and Whatcoat were all single men, and eighty or a hundred dollars, with allowance for their traveling expenses, constituted their support. The leading preachers, too, in the Church, had been single men. Thus episcopal and clerical single life among the leading preachers, had shaped ministerial support merely to suit the pressing wants of unmarried men while efficient, leaving sickness and old age to depend on charity or fortuitous circumstances. • As a matter of course, the married preachers received little more than the single ones, and when they did receive any thing extra, it was considered as an unnecessary, or a prodigal expenditure. And such were the unpleasant circumstances attending the

forced supplies of married preachers, that most, as already stated, of the men of independence and worth preferred locating, to being met in every direction with repulse or disparagement. It is true, that the General conference of 1816, ordained that "the book agents, in conjunction with the book committee, in New York, be authorized to estimate the sum requisite to defray the necessary expenses of the Bishops' families, for which they shall be authorized to draw on the editor and general book steward." (Bangs' History, volume iii, page 53.) But then custom had already decided this question so far as to render the acceptance of the appropriation a thing out of order, and a kind of innovation on former usage. And it is probable that Bishop Roberts did not avail himself of this provision earlier than the year 1819. Two hundred dollars and his traveling expenses, composed the utmost that they could expect to receive from the Church. With such an allowance, they could not reside in any of the eastern cities, or in fact in any city, unless it was done in dependence on their own private resources. These were small, amounting to a cabin and some land very little improved, and now so much neglected by their long absence, that it would scarcely rent for the taxes. It is true, there were those in some of the eastern cities, with whom he was acquainted, and in whose estimation he stood high, that would probably have assisted them. But then this was an uncertain provision, and could not be depended on, so as to justify him in contracting the debt of house-rent and family expenses. Besides, this mode of living did not suit the views and feelings of independency which they had imbibed in early life, and had cherished and practiced down to the present period of their history. Residing east of the mountains was, therefore, mutually abandoned.

It was next inquired, shall we travel together? This, too, was canvassed, and had its difficulties. It would be

scarcely practicable for a female, naturally retiring in her habits, to keep pace with a Methodist Bishop. To say the least, it could not be done with comfort. An unwelcome visit, too, might be made by the Bishop's wife, where it was not expected, and the plan, moreover, was not in keeping with their spirit of independence. It was, therefore, set aside.

Their determined choice was, or rather the necessity of their case compelled them, to repair to their old cabin, on the land which he had located just twenty years previous. Here they could be independent. And if they had privations and difficulties, they had them to themselves, and were not exposed to the public gaze of a city, or the inspection of wealthy friends or visitors. Here, too, they could be on a perfect equality with their neighbors. Their house or cabin, their furniture, and all their household utensils, were as good as any in the settlement. If Mrs. Roberts must spin, and weave, and make garden, and feed poultry occasionally, all her neighbors did the same things. And if Mr. Roberts, in any spare time at home, must plough, and make rails, and work hard, the rest of his neighbors did so likewise. Moreover, the landlord could not ask rent for his house, for the cabin was his own. The carpet venter and cabinet-maker could not crave of him the settlement of their bills, as he needed nothing in their line, and contracted no debts in their establishments. Besides, a bedstead, good enough for the Bishop and his lady, had been made in less than one day by the Bishop's own hand, and on it they could repose sweetly, except when occasionally interrupted by the drippings from the leaky roof; but, then, these were mostly caught by the sugar-troughs in the loft.

Before their consultation was ended, their hearts, warmed by the spirit of independence, beat high for Shenango. Their spring still flowed, pure and fresh as ever; their

double cabin was still standing in its rustic beauty; and the few neglected acres could soon be made to assume a flourishing aspect. A few domestic fowls, and three or four domestic animals, would supply many of their necessary wants. Their course was fixed, and Shenango was their destination.

They purposed to set out for the west from Baltimore, to which place Mrs. Roberts went by water from Philadelphia. Mr. Roberts and his nephew, little George, went on horse-back, the former riding on a saddle and the latter on a blanket.

At Baltimore, the friends procured for him Bishop Asbury's carriage and traveling trunk. His two horses were harnessed and put to the carriage, in which they all three traveled, taking along with them as much clothing and bed-clothes as they could. They proceeded on their journey without difficulty. When, however, they came to the mountains, the road was then newly graded for a turnpike, but was uncovered with the stone metal. At the first mountain ascent they came to, the mud was very deep in some places. Mrs. Roberts and little George had to get out in very bad places and walk. Having done this at one place, where the road was unusually muddy, and having gained the summit of the hill by a direct foot-path, as the main road wound around, she sat down to wait the arrival of Mr. Roberts. He walked along driving his horses. Long boots, long stockings and breeches, were then the clerical fashion of the times. The horses and carriage got literally fastened in the mud. He put his shoulder to the wheel, pushed with all his might, gave the word of command to the horses, and the carriage moved upward. By this mode of procedure he gained the point where his partner was. She had watched his operations with feelings of commiseration, yet still she could not avoid smiling on seeing him fairly bespattered with mud from head to foot.

The mud had even run over the tops of his boots, and here and there on his person were very large smearings. On his arrival at the top of the mountain, she exclaimed, with some pleasantry, "You are a pretty looking Bishop now."

On going down Laurel Hill, west of Fort Ligonier, they found the road was still rough; and while she was making the best of her way on foot, choosing her steps down the shelving rocks and steep slopes, and while he was engaged in driving, at the same time walking and balancing the carriage so as to keep it from overturning, her band-box fell out, and the wheels passed over it, crushing it completely, and injuring materially her caps, bonnet and other articles. When near the foot of the mountain, the band-box was missing, which furnished him an opportunity of returning for it. The fate of the band-box served as a pretty good offset for the previous muddy rencountre in ascending the mountain.

They arrived in safety at Shenango. The Bishop proceeded to the Natchez conference. She accompanied him to Cadiz, and then returned and lived with Nancy M'Granahan, his sister, till spring. He traveled on horse-back to Natchez, Mississippi, and continued his travels till the following spring, when he arrived at home. He was sick among the Indians, as he took the fever and ague on the Mississippi. At Port Gibson, he lay three or four weeks dangerously ill. His fare among the Indians was mostly sour hommony. At first, when passing through their country, they charged him high for ferriage, even as much as two dollars on some occasions. But on learning that he was a chief, they let him go free.

Mrs. Roberts, early in the spring, and before the arrival of Mr. Roberts, came to the determination to reside in their own cabin. As the clap-boards were old, the roof needed repair. The neighbors kindly offered their aid, and, as was the custom, laid the roof anew, by adding some new clap-

boards to such of the old as were still good, turning the best end outside. In heavy rains, however, as already stated, the water would find its way between them. On the first night after the Bishop's return, he was very much wet in bed, and shook the following day with the ague. Further repairs were made to the roof; but it was still far from being water-proof. Having come to the conclusion to remove to Indiana, he neither built a better house, nor repaired the old one, further than to adjust the clap-boards occasionally. Nor was it at all remarkable, that he lived in so leaky a tenement, as all his neighbors were in the same condition, and it was considered a thing of course.

Here we would remark, that we have no journal of Bishop Roberts' travels. He wrote nothing of the kind himself, and consequently we have nothing from him, except the brief narrative, already alluded to, written by Dr. Simpson, and reaching from his birth to the year 1808, or to the sixth year of his ministry. After this period, we have no written documents to rely on. The annual minutes do not say what Bishops attend the conferences, nor always at what time and place the conferences sit. It is true, that at the end of the minutes of each conference, it is said when and where the following session shall be held; but then changes have sometimes been made in the time, and thus great uncertainty is thrown around the precise date. And very little can be gained from the proceedings of conferences, as published in our periodicals, for they do not say much concerning the movements of the Bishops that would be appropriate for a narrative of their lives. Had we a detailed account of the travels of Bishop Roberts, especially his journeyings in the western frontier, similar to the interesting narratives which Bishop Morris gave of his tour from St. Louis to Texas, it would doubtless furnish us with a number and variety of the most thrilling events. But Bishop Roberts kept no such journal. This will form a

chasm in the history of his life, which no human art can fill up.

But even this is an incident of his life. His means of information in literature, while young, were very small. To compose, at that day, formed no part of a common education, as the great mass were not supposed to need the art of expressing their thoughts clearly and forcibly on paper. This was considered the privilege only of the few literati. Neither did Bishop Roberts, in after life, apply himself to composition with the view of transmitting his thoughts to posterity, though his attainments by reading were highly respectable, and his acquisitions by experience and observation, guided by his native prudence and large mind, were very superior indeed. His great error was, that he believed he could never succeed in this. But practice would have made him perfect; as is almost invariably the case. Cultivating the art of composition, and transmitting to posterity the incidents of an eventful life, is a debt that leading men owe to the present and rising generations. And should the present limited narrative ever reach those who sit at the helm of our ecclesiastical affairs, we hope they will be convinced of the necessity of chronicling the events of their day, for the benefit of posterity. If they will not do this, others will do it for them imperfectly, or falsely, or perhaps maliciously. It is right and important, therefore, that they should testify for themselves what they have seen, heard, or know, and not permit either true, false, or suborned witnesses to say what they please concerning them. We must slightly find fault with Bishop Roberts for his negligence, or rather mistake; while we desire to apologize for him, in consequence of his want of early opportunities, and also his great modesty and humility, which rendered it an intolerable cross for him ever to say any thing of his own performances, that would tend to make him prominent in the eyes of either the Church or the

world— a feature not always visible in the character of distinguished individuals.

In the fall of 1817, he and Mrs. Roberts visited Indiana, and returned in the winter to Shenango. His brother, Lewis, to whom he was strongly attached, had purchased land and moved, if we are rightly informed, to that state. The Bishop, too, had made a small purchase of wild land in the same neighborhood, and had determined to make this country his future residence.

He hunted considerably this winter while at home; and as usual met with no small degree of success. A recurrence to his former favorite pursuit seemed to delight him greatly, and he enjoyed an occasional hunt as much as at any former time.

The ague still remained on him, and he had also an attack of the jaundice. But his strong constitution resisted their force, and he was enabled faithfully to follow up his appointments.

In the winter, probably toward the close, he visited the Virginia conference. In his travels this year, he lay out a whole night, and held his horse by the bridle to prevent him running away. It is hard to account for this, unless we attribute it to his extreme diffidence, which often prevented him from enjoying the comforts of life, or to his want of money to bear his expenses; rather than make his circumstances known, he would, as he often did, lie out all night, when almost any one would have entertained him gladly. Besides, such was the benevolence of his heart, that he has been known to give his funds for charitable purposes, and when all exhausted, he would suffer hunger or any other privation rather than be considered troublesome in the least degree to his acquaintances and friends.

It was while going to one of the southern conferences, in 1818, that the famous occurrence took place, which has again and again gone the rounds of the papers, under the

title of "*Bishop Roberts and the young preacher.*" Sometimes it has been referred to Bishop George; but this is a mistake, Bishop Roberts being the traveler alluded to. The accounts concerning it have been very much exaggerated, and, moreover, one account by no means agrees with another; but that it was a real occurrence is certain, as he frequently related it to the members of his family, and some other intimate friends. He never would reveal the name of the young preacher, for he esteemed him as an excellent man. The preacher became eminent among his brethren; and the event itself made an impression on his mind which he never forgot. We will not venture to give the particulars of the incident, as the precise account cannot be now collected from any authentic source within our reach.

In January, 1818, Mrs. Roberts traveled on horse-back from Shenango to Alexandria, where she met the Bishop. She expected to have had company, but was disappointed. She met, however, a preacher at Bedford, Pennsylvania, who rode along with her to Alexandria. She was not to be deterred from her purpose by trivial causes. She next went with the Bishop to the Baltimore and Philadelphia conferences, taking York in their way, to which place he returned with her: she then traveled in company with a young man and woman to Pittsburg, riding one horse and leading another. On the horse she rode, she also had a pack, and on the one she led was another pack, quite large, placed on a pack-saddle. These packs consisted of the remainder of their clothing and books, which could not be conveyed before, together with some presents in clothing, that their friends in Baltimore and Philadelphia had bestowed on them. At times she led the horse with a line attached to his bridle, he following the one she rode. When tired of this mode, she would drive him before; but this was attended with some inconvenience, as he would

occasionally run off the path, and then she was compelled to gallop after him in order to turn him into the right way again. She traveled alone from Pittsburg to Shenango, a distance of nearly eighty miles. No misfortune befell her, except that she was once thrown from her horse, but was not injured by the fall.

The Bishop proceeded on horse-back to the New York, New England and Genesee conferences. On his way home, where he arrived in July, he traveled a new route, which was through the Genesee Flats, and subsisted for three days on blackberries. We suspect his money again ran out; and, as usual, his extreme backwardness prevented him making his wants known. He also attended the Ohio conference this year, which sat in Steubenville, August 7th, 1818.

In 1819, he fully concluded to move from Shenango to Lawrence county, Indiana. His leading reasons for so doing were the following, as far as we can learn:

He was not very well pleased with the soil and climate of Mercer county, after he had become acquainted with Indiana and other parts of the then far west. The soil and climate of the southern part of Indiana pleased him much better. As he had a taste for agriculture and retired life, he supposed that Indiana would suit him exceedingly well.

His brother, Lewis, had already moved there, and, as before stated, he was most fondly attached to him, and, consequently, desired to live near him, not only for his society, but also to avail himself of his watch-care over his own temporal concerns when he was from home.

He had, also, several nephews and nieces, for whom he wished to do all that lay in his power; and he believed, by moving to the new country, he could aid them more than by staying where he was.

But, above all, he desired to be as little expense to the Church as possible; and, with his spirit of independence

on the one hand, and his generosity on the other, he thought he could secure to himself a living, and, at the same time, depend but little on others. No appropriation, it is probable, was made for the support of his family; or, if there was, he had not applied for it; and he got no more from the Church than his traveling expenses and his quarterage; that is, two hundred dollars per annum. His property at Shenango was worth but very little. The mill scarcely cleared itself; and both it and a hundred acres of the land were sold for a trivial sum, a very small part of which he realized. The remaining three hundred acres were not of much value. The improvements consisted merely of a small clearing, the old double cabin, and a log stable. The whole was probably then worth three or four hundred dollars, and this amount could hardly have been obtained in good payments from responsible men. It is true, he sold it, about this time, for five hundred dollars; but, after waiting many years, he did not receive his pay, and the land finally reverted to him again. It was, however, in 1832, sold to several persons, on long payments, amounting in all to six hundred dollars; and then he received it in small sums, after considerable delays.

After having fully resolved to move to the state of Indiana, he packed up his goods in November, of this year. He was delayed, partly in consequence of attending the Ohio and other conferences in the fall, and partly by snagging one of his horses. When the morning of his departure had come, he was earnestly desirous of setting out very early, in order to avoid the affliction of bidding adieu to his friends. But in this he was disappointed. His relatives and neighbors convened at an early hour to see him start. Before a final separation took place, they all united in fervently petitioning the throne of grace for a parting blessing, and likewise in imploring the aid of Israel's God to guide them through the ever-varying and

dangerous pathway of life, and ultimately bring them to that sweet celestial home, where "adieu and farewells are sounds unknown." After prayer, such were the greetings of his friends, that the day was far spent before they set out, and they could only travel a few miles before night overtook them.

The company consisted of himself and wife, Thomas and Robert Roberts, sons of his brother, Thomas, his little nephew, George, and his niece, Esther Lindsay, daughter of his favorite sister, Elizabeth. Mr. and Mrs. Roberts rode in the two-horse carriage, which was also filled pretty well with their bed-clothes and other clothing. Esther rode on a horse, with a good sized pack under her. The two young men had another horse, which they rode alternately. Little George sometimes rode in the carriage, and at other times behind Esther, or one of the young men. They carried with them their own provisions, which, when exhausted, they replenished as opportunities offered. In this manner they traveled, until they reached the end of their journey, which was on the 28th of November.

During their whole route, he rarely stopped at the house of any of his religious friends. The first night he staid with Mr. Fell, a few miles distant, and the next with his old friend, Dr. Bostwich; while, during the rest of the journey, he put up at the public taverns, and it was rarely known who he was until after he had left. On arriving at any place on Saturday night, he remained till Monday morning, and on Sabbath always attended the house of God, but never proclaimed who he was. The discovery was left to the circumstances of the occasion. Even in attending worship he always took an humble and retired seat, so that few would suspect him of being a preacher, unless his dignified appearance and plain clothing might serve as indexes of discovery.

His brother, Lewis, had succeeded in raising a cabin for

him; but it was the mere shell of one, having only the rough log walls, the clap-board roof, and sleepers, and being without chimney, door, windows, floor, or loft.

They arrived in this new episcopal residence, on the evening of the day before mentioned. Their provisions were exhausted: they obtained some potatoes, however, for supper, which had been raised for them near the cabin, or else were procured from a neighbor. As they had no fixtures for boiling them, they made up a fire in the place where the chimney was to stand, and roasted them. They were placed in rows on a sleeper, about a foot above the ground; and the good Bishop, always thankful for even the smallest favors of Heaven, devoutly asked a blessing before partaking of the meal, and likewise returned thanks with equal devotion, for thus spreading a table before them in the midst of the wilderness. But Esther, who was then only about fourteen years of age, was far from being satisfied with the present meagre fare, and the prospect of comfort which lay before them. She retired to a corner of the cabin, in rather a disconsolate mood, which was very unusual to her, and observed to little George, and the young men, that she did not see why uncle should ask a blessing and return thanks, for a supper of nothing else in the world but roasted potatoes. They placed some unhewed puncheons on the sleepers, and prepared their beds for the night as well as they could. Just as they were about going to sleep, the wolves began to howl not far from the house. The open spaces for the door and chimney had no protection from their incursion. A large fire, however, served to intimidate them, which would, also, aid in discovering them should they make an entrance. As they continued howling for some time, Esther became very much alarmed, as she had heard it stated, that the wolves attacked a horse of theirs in Shenango, and killed him, just after old Mr. Richford had moved there. Mr. Roberts used his utmost persuasions to

pacify her and little George also, he being much alarmed likewise. After a while the wolves, intimidated probably by the blazing fire, and having no good prospect of prey, scampered off howling, their cries soon dying away in the distance. A good night's sleep relieved them from their cares, and they arose in the morning as cheerful and contented as the surrounding circumstances would allow—grateful to an ever-watchful Providence, who had thus far supplied their wants and preserved them in safety.

All hands were now actively employed in preparing the new house for a comfortable winter residence. Their beds and clothing were all taken out of doors in the morning, and in again at night. A large fire was made near the house, to serve as a kitchen fire during the day. The Bishop, the two young men and George, worked at the place from morning dawn till dark. The puncheons were hewed, jointed, smoothed, the joints sawed, and all keyed up, and the entire surface smoothed off with the adze. The chimney was then raised and the hearth laid. The clap-board door was also made, and thus the house was ready for occupancy day and night; so that it was not necessary now for Mrs. Roberts to sit down on a log in the open air to knit or sew, when not employed in adjusting such of their things as had been injured by the journey.

After the house had been made perfectly habitable, all the males, with the Bishop at their head, cleared three acres south of the dwelling. They always ate their breakfast before day, by lamp, or fire light, and worked as long as they could possibly see. The remainder of the nights, till bed-time, was spent in making articles of furniture, or something needful for out-door work. A large chair was made of green oak, simply with the axe and auger; but when finished, it was too heavy to be lifted by Esther or George: they could only push it along. Several stools were also made, for recreation in the evenings, as well as to serve in

the place of chairs. A bed-stead was borrowed from his brother, Lewis, for the benefit of the Bishop and Mrs. Roberts, while the other members of the family had to sleep as sweetly as they could during the winter without such a convenience. The three acres, after being cleared, were sown with wheat in December, in order to meet the wants of the coming year.

In moving, their money was all exhausted. Mrs. Roberts, however, was anxious by some means to obtain a cow. She argued that one would be very serviceable in furnishing them with milk, even allowing they could make no butter. The Bishop thought they ought to endeavor to do without one, at least until spring, as he had no money to buy one with. She urged him to try his credit, as it was a matter both of comfort and economy. With some difficulty he got the sum of twenty dollars, with which he purchased one.

Bread also was indispensably necessary. He sold one of his four horses, and bought some wheat and corn, or else exchanged him for some: the wheat was fifty cents per bushel, and the corn twenty-five.

The Bishop, during the winter, indulged himself occasionally in a day's hunting, which amply repaid his toil with supplies of venison, as he killed several deer. This, indeed, was the cheapest and most convenient mode of procuring meat for his family at that time.

A pen or rough stable was a necessary convenience, especially at the present season of the year.

A ten acre field was cleared during the winter by the Bishop, the two young men, and little George. As they wished to have it in readiness by planting time, they labored hard, continuing, as before, till dark. The severity of their work, however, was relieved a little by attending to the log heaps that were on fire.

The nearest mill was eighteen miles distant. This occa-

sioned the loss of considerable time when grinding had to be done; and in order to prevent the loss as much as possible, hommony was used plentifully; which was prepared by the corn being pounded in a trough made for the purpose, or by hulling it in lye; or, in case of necessity, corn meal was used—the hand-mill being resorted to, or if no hand-mill was in the house, the grater was employed.

In the spring, the Bishop left for the conferences, taking with him one of the horses, and leaving the other two with the young men.

By planting time, the ten acres were cleared, fenced, and likewise ploughed, and furrowed out one way, for receiving the corn. Mrs. Roberts, as usual, in the absence of the Bishop, superintended every thing, both in the house and in the field. She had taken a catarrh in one of the fingers of her right hand in the spring, and was forced to have it tied up. It so happened that her hand was the worst at planting time. She arranged all as follows: Esther was appointed to do all the house-work; George furrowed the corn-field the second time, making it ready for planting; Mrs. Roberts carried the corn in her pocket, for such was the custom of those days, and with her left hand dropped, while her right was kept in the sling; and the two young men covered the corn. In this way the field was very soon planted. The corn crop turned out to be excellent, and the wheat tolerable, though sown in December.

They also raised flax, with which Mrs. Roberts made the linen necessary for her family. The young men broke and scutched it, Mrs. Roberts spun it, and Esther wove it.

We are indebted to the Rev. Mr. Shanks, of the Indiana conference, for the following narrative of Bishop Roberts' attendance on Divine worship one Sabbath day at a village, unobserved. Mr. Shanks then lived in the neighborhood of Mr. Mitchell. Mr. Cravens was his father-in-law. He was present at the meeting, and was informed of the occur-

rence by Mr. Mitchell himself, about two hours after the departure of Mr. Roberts, on Monday :

“Early in the year, 1819, Bishop Roberts, on his way from Pennsylvania to the conferences in the south, arrived on Sabbath morning, in Fincastle, the county-seat of Botetourt county, Virginia. Having no acquaintance in the place, he called at a public house and took breakfast. On making inquiry respecting the arrangements for the Sabbath, he was told that there was but one meeting-house in the town, and that the Rev. William Cravens, a Methodist minister, had to preach there at 10 o'clock, and, also, the Rev. Robert Logan, a Presbyterian minister, at 11 of the same day. At the sound of the bell, the Bishop went to the church, and took his seat amongst the hearers. According to arrangement, Mr. Cravens preached and Mr. Logan followed. The Rev. Edward Mitchell, a Methodist minister, who lived a few miles southwest of the place, was called upon to close. When the congregation was dismissed, Mr. Roberts inquired of Mr. Mitchell, how far he lived from the town, and in what direction. Being politely answered, he then said to Mr. Mitchell, if he would wait until he could get his horse from the house at which he had put up, he would go along with him. To this, Mr. Mitchell readily consented. As they left the town, Mr. Mitchell, who was fond of conversation, and always desirous of giving it a religious turn, commenced talking about the preaching they had heard. Mr. Cravens having insisted on the doctrine of restitution, he wished to know of the stranger what was his opinion of it. Mr. Roberts stated that he did not object to the doctrine in the least. Mr. Mitchell, still wishing to turn the subject to the best advantage with the stranger, said, very pointedly, it was one thing to consent to the truth and another to practice upon it. Mr. Roberts, discovering that he was not suspected, was willing that Mr. Mitchell should give what direction to the conversation he might think

proper; and modestly replied, with his usual peculiarity, to such questions as were proposed to him.

“When they arrived at Mr. Mitchell’s residence, Mr. M. said to him, ‘There is the stable, and the hay, and eorn, and my rule is, that all who come to see me must wait on themselves.’ To this the stranger raised no objections, and put up his horse. When he had done, the dinner was ready. Mr. Mitchell, as was his custom, asked a blessing; and when seated, resumed the conversation, and took the liberty of inquiring of the stranger where he was from, and to what place he was going? On these questions being answered, he was next asked, what was his name. To which the Bishop replied, ‘My name is Roberts.’ ‘Any relation of Robert R. Roberts, one of our Bishops?’ asked Mr. Mitchell. ‘My name is Robert R. Roberts,’ said the stranger. At this, Mr. Mitchell involuntarily dropped his knife and fork, and gazed a moment speechless at his visitor; and all at once the thought struck him that his appearance, conversation, and general deportment were those of a minister of the Gospel; and it was a matter of astonishment to him that he had not thought of his being a clergyman before.

“Mr. Mitchell, after having composed himself a little, asked the Bishop why he had not made himself known to them when he first entered the town, and preached for them? To which the Bishop replied, that it was his intention so to have done: he had traveled rapidly the day before, in order to enjoy the holy day of rest among them; but on learning the arrangements that had been made, and also that Mr. Cravens, like himself, was a stranger, and had only stopped to spend the Sabbath day there, he thought it best to attend the house of God as an humble hearer of the word of life, and thus have the privilege of worshiping with the people of that strange land in the capacity of a private Christian.”

CHAPTER XI.

EPISTOLARY CORRESPONDENCE.

IN the foregoing chapter, we followed Bishop Roberts up to the third year of his episcopacy, or to the year 1819, at which time he had fully settled in Indiana. We were guided in our narrative by such information as we had collected by our own inquiries, from the oral communications of his near relatives and intimate friends—those who had been the participators in, or observers of the events which they narrated. As already stated, we have no journal of his travels from the time he was elected Bishop to his death; and as his relatives committed nothing concerning him to writing, their information was confined to what they were eye and ear-witnesses of, while the Bishop was among them. Of his travels and adventures, and the occurrences connected with them, there is nothing on record. Besides keeping no journal of what transpired, he wrote very few letters, and in the few that he did write, scarcely any thing is to be found respecting himself. A very small number of letters were in his possession at the time of his death that had been written previous to 1824. Most of those received before this time perished, as we suppose, either prior to his leaving Shenango for Indiana, or during the few first years of his residence there. We give two reasons for this. The first is, that he placed no special estimate on papers of this character, in consequence of his unaffected reluctance, or rather unwillingness, to have any thing made known concerning himself. The other reason is, that he had no suitable place of safe keeping for them during the period referred to. In Shenango he had neither book-case, cupboards, nor any thing of the kind, in which to deposit them; and even if he had had any, the drippings through the clap-board roof would probably have reached them, and

thus destroyed them. In Indiana, too, though free from a leaky roof, yet he had no place of deposit for his papers even for several years after he moved there. At any rate, we find but few papers, and those few of no special interest, written before the year 1824. It is probable, that about this time, he prepared some convenient place for preserving important manuscripts.

Among his papers, written after the time just mentioned, we find some letters that were sent by himself to his relatives. We also find a number from the other Bishops, and several distinguished individuals, which our readers will be pleased to peruse. In the absence of almost all other matter, except some small gleanings of our own and a few friends, we deem it advisable to present to the public the most interesting letters, or at least parts of them, introducing such other facts as we have gathered, and observing the chronological order of events as far as we can. This is the very best we can do, or that any one else could do, under the circumstances. Had those who are in the possession of facts respecting the Bishop, communicated them to us, we could have made our work more interesting. The public call was earnestly made eight months ago, and yet few responses have been given. Our biographical performance, therefore, of this most worthy individual, must be deficient for the foregoing reasons, as well as from the want of graphic powers in the writer.

In 1820, he was conveyed home sick, and during his illness, suffered much. His strong constitution, however, very soon counteracted his disease, which was fever and ague. When he had so far recovered as to be able to work a little on the days in which he was free from the chills and fever, he improved most rapidly; and by a full exercise of his muscular powers, in clearing land and putting up rude buildings to suit the temporary wants of his new location, his former robust state of body was restored, so that he was

ready to commence his tour of conferences as soon as was necessary.

In the summer of 1821, Bishop Roberts, passing through Chillicothe, on his episcopal tour, and learning that a camp meeting in the vicinity of that city was then in progress, attended, and preached daily during his stay. On Sabbath, the appointment at 10 o'clock was assigned him. After ascending the stand, he received a note, written at the instance of a young lady, the daughter of General M'A., residing near Chillicothe, who lay dangerously ill of the bilious fever, and of whose recovery but little hope was entertained by her friends. She felt that she was unprepared to die, and had become deeply concerned about the salvation of her soul. The note she had that morning sent to the Bishop, earnestly desired the prayers of the congregation in her behalf. The Bishop read the contents from the stand, withholding the name and family connections of the young lady, and then made a few remarks to move the sympathies of the congregation, and concluded by calling upon them to unite in earnest prayer to God for her salvation, and for the recovery of her health. His address to the throne of grace on this occasion, which was the opening prayer of the service, was most fervent, importunate, and powerful, and was made apparently with all the confidence and strong faith of one who felt assured that his requests would be heard and answered. And so it was: for, in that very hour, the young lady began to recover, and in a few days was fully restored to health, and is living at the present day. Whether the serious impressions which were made on her mind during her illness, resulted in any permanent spiritual good, we are unable to say. We have been informed, however, that she was satisfied that God had spared her life in answer to the prayers of the Bishop and the pious part of the congregation.

On Monday, the Rev. Dr. W., a distinguished minister

of the Presbyterian Church, preached at 10 o'clock, and was followed by the Bishop. The Doctor's text was, "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law," Romans iii, 31. The discourse was an able one, and was well delivered. When the Doctor had concluded, Bishop Roberts, after singing and prayer, took for his text, "He that loveth pureness of heart, for the grace of his lips the King shall be his friend," Proverbs xxii, 11. In the first division of his discourse, he defined with great clearness the doctrine of "pureness of heart," or Christian perfection, and defended it by a series of arguments and proofs, drawn chiefly from the Scriptures, which were sufficient to convince every one who heard him of the truth of his position. In the second division—"the grace of his lips"—he dwelt a few moments on the peculiarity of the phrase, lingering upon its apparent difficulty, as though he was himself in doubt how to solve it, until he had awakened in his hearers the deepest attention. He then proceeded to show the true import of the words, and presented, in a lucid and highly interesting exposition, the excellence and attractiveness of holy conversation, purity of language, or administering "grace" to the listener, so necessary in all who would attain unto "pureness of heart," and continue therein. In the last division of his subject—"the King shall be his friend"—the Bishop was peculiarly interesting. He described briefly, but eloquently, the character and attributes of the "Friend" of the pure in heart, the "King of kings!" reciting numerous appropriate Scripture promises which were applicable to all the diversified cases of mankind, and giving the most happy illustrations of their power and efficacy. In this part of his discourse, the Bishop was peculiarly animated and impressive, and his words were accompanied with an unusual degree of the power and energy of the Holy Spirit. Taking the sermon altogether, it was, for strength and

clearness, for true eloquence and power, certainly a superior performance. We are informed by a devout and intelligent Christian, who was present on the occasion, that, although twenty-two years have elapsed since its delivery, he still retains a vivid recollection of the arrangement and the material parts of the discourse, and, also, of the almost inimitable earnestness, impressiveness and power of his eloquence, as well as of the tones of his full, clear, strong and musical voice, the fine, commanding appearance of his figure, and the natural gracefulness and ease of his manner and gestures.

In the summer of 1822, his hewed log house was erected, and was finished in the winter of 1823 and 1824. His own laborious exertions were put into requisition, as well as all the means he could avail himself of, in order to finish it. As a specimen of the economy which he found necessary to observe, we will present an extract of a letter to Mrs. Roberts, dated February 8th, 1822. The boys, or young men, referred to, were his nephews, that lived with him, and cleared and worked his land:

“Having a few leisure moments, I write to inform you that I have employed Mr. Hamersley to saw my boards. You will, therefore, tell the boys to take the logs to his mill. They can be furnished with oak, as well as poplar, at Mr. Jolley’s. The poplar he is to saw on the shares; and for the oak, I pay him thirty-seven and a half cents per hundred. I have agreed with Mr. Pro to buy you an auger, and Lindsay can take it to you. I think the saw-logs ought to be cut about twelve feet long, but the boys may consult Mr. Jolley on this particular, as he knows more about building than I do. When you get the boards, and have them seasoned, you may call on Mr. John Leatherman to lay the lower floor, or, at least, to work out the amount of seventeen dollars, for which I hold his note. My love to Esther and the boys, and, as always, to yourself.”

The following letter from the Rev. Wiley Ledbetter, missionary among the Choctaw Indians, will give a lively picture of the state of things among those Indians at the time it was written. It is dated April 15, 1824:

“According to your direction, I wrote you a letter about the last of March, in which I gave a full statement of the mission up to that time; but owing to the waters being high, and the danger of the letter being lost, I have thought it proper to write to you again. If that letter should not have come to hand, I will, at some future time, give you an account of the revival in this nation; as it is important, under existing circumstances, that an exact account of the commencement and progress of the work should be published.

“In the letter, I informed you of twelve that had been converted. They are all now growing in grace and in the knowledge of divine things. Since that time, six more have been brought to rejoice in the pardoning love of God. This accession, added to the former, makes eighteen, five of whom are white men, one is a colored woman, and the remaining twelve are natives. Among the natives is a woman that must be upward of thirty years old.

“The work appears to be spreading in a very encouraging manner, and a spirit of inquiry is waked up everywhere. The people are soliciting me to come and preach to them in almost every part of the nation. We have sufficient ground for at least four circuits; and it is very important that these should be laid out and supplied with preachers as soon as possible. Those that I cannot visit, complain of me for not preaching to them as well as to others. O, Lord, in mercy send laborers into the field. It will be necessary to enlarge my work so as to embrace at least twenty-five appointments by the 1st of July. This I shall do with the hope of receiving ministerial assistance shortly.

“The prospect for establishing schools is flattering. The people are very desirous that we have those institutions amongst them. If possible, we must open a boarding school this fall. I am continually pressed for information on that subject; and I have to satisfy the people by holding them in expectation that something will, this fall, be done. Are there not families in Baltimore that are able and willing to aid in this enterprise? If two families, that have the means, would unite, they could easily support one poor Indian child in the school; and, at this rate, eighty families would maintain forty children. Add to this, what may be done in other cities, beside what the missionary society and the government will do, and we shall be able to render the mission respectable and useful. I refer you to the circular of the Secretary of War, dated September 3d, 1819. The character of missionaries is by some held in contempt, from the supposition that the scheme is a speculating affair. In order to remove this erroneous notion, I would suggest the propriety of having trustees appointed to our schools, who shall be required to examine most rigidly into their condition, and report quarterly to the people. The place that we have in contemplation for a boarding school, is in the neighborhood of the Talking Warriors. A great number of children are there, and the place is very healthy.

“My old horse has given out. I have had to purchase two, one for myself and the other for my interpreter. They cost me one hundred and fifty dollars. I have bought twenty dollars’ worth of clothes for the interpreter. This sum, one hundred and seventy dollars, I stand in need of.

“I wrote to you that it was expected the chiefs and others would start for the City of Washington about the 1st of May, and that they wished to see you there, or that you would appoint some person to wait on them. It is probable that they will not start until the last of May.

“I wait with great anxiety to hear from you, and receive

instructions with respect to commencing the buildings for a school."

From the annexed letter, written by Bishop George, it will be seen that a pastoral address was prepared by him, and sanctioned by Bishop Hedding, and then sent to Bishop Roberts, for the approval of him as well as the other Bishops. It is dated July 6th, and was directed to the Bishop at Zanesville, Ohio, where he received it while attending the session of the conference there. Bishops M'Kendree and Soule were also present on the occasion:

"These lines leave brother Hedding and myself reasonably well. We have finished the New York and New England conferences. We have had general peace, with one exception. Joshua Randall, the old preacher, who was arrested when you were at the Bath conference, has continued to support his almost incomprehensible proposition, which is, if I understand it, that 'while Christ died for original transgression, he made no atonement for actual sins.' With this strange theological enigma, he has vexed and teased his brethren until they have taken away his parchments, from which decision he has appealed to General conference, according to custom.

"In these conferences our increase in the ministry approaches to redundancy; but in the membership we progress slowly. My fears are that, in this respect, we shall lose our balance of proportion; and if we do, we shall sink slowly, but certainly.

"Being in the regions of literature, brother Hedding and myself have prepared the pastoral letter that General conference directed us to write, which we send inclosed, for the examination of yourself and your colleagues. If it should meet your approbation, it will be necessary to send it to the editors as soon as possible, in order that they may print and circulate it. Something of the kind ought to be done speedily, that our people may see that we take no part in

this unhappy revolutionizing system, that has been and is now progressing.

“We are now able to report the time of the Pittsburg and Ohio conferences for the next year, which are as follows: Pittsburg, September the 5th, and Ohio, October the 12th.

“I should thank you to write and let us know as soon as possible where they are to be held. At all events I hope you will write to me as often as you can, and you may depend on an answer. My colleague does excellently in his new business. Pray for your brother.”

The following is the address referred to in the preceding letter; and although it was prepared in 1824, it is not wholly inapplicable to the state of the Church now:

“BELOVED BRETHREN,—As it is our greatest desire, that you should prosper and abound in every good word and work, we would use our utmost endeavors to promote your spiritual interests. And were it possible, we would visit you all in person, and show you, by word and by deed, how great is our love toward you, and how earnestly we long after you all. But, considering the nature and extent of our labors, you will readily perceive, this is impossible. To make up our lack of service to you in person, and to comply with the request of the General conference, we send you this general epistle of advice and instruction; wherein we salute you all as beloved brethren, and heirs together with us of the grace of God. And we are drawn to this, not only by the love we feel for you, but, also, by the consideration of the high responsibility we stand under to God. In the order of the Church, and we trust by the providence of God, we have been called to take the general superintendency of a numerous and a growing people—a people that have been hitherto highly favored of the Lord, and that he seems to have raised up to subserve important purposes in the kingdom of grace. In such a station, our duties are

at all times important, and our responsibility great; but more especially at this time.

“Never was there a period, perhaps, more momentously interesting to our Church than the present. We have, through the blessing of God, seventeen conferences, between three and four thousand traveling and local preachers, and more than three hundred thousand members. And as if what had been done, was only preparatory to something much more extensive, great and effectual doors are opening on every side, to enable us to enlarge our field of labor and increase our usefulness. To fill these, requires all our united energies, and the most ardent zeal in the work. And yet, perhaps, this is the time, when we are most in danger of dividing our energies and abating in our zeal. From the history of the Church we learn, that almost all religious sects, not even excepting the primitive sect, that was ‘everywhere spoken against,’ have, in their progress, declined into lukewarmness, formality, and worldly pomp, or vain superstition. This seems to be the course of nature. Purity, humility, and faithfulness, are owned of God; and the Church that is clothed with these, will be blessed of him. Though persecuted, it will increase, until by its numbers and influence, it is able to overlook all opposition. Then comes the danger. Primitive simplicity is laid aside, pride is engendered, and divisions creep in, till those who began in the spirit, end in the flesh; and those who might have been useful in the world, become a stumbling block and a curse.

“Beloved brethren, shall it be so with us? With all the warning examples we have before us—with all the advantages, arising from our excellent institutions, our itinerant ministry, and our past experience, together with the encouragement derived from the holy lives and triumphant death of so many who have lived and died under the influence of our doctrines, shall we too grow lukewarm, and like the

Churches of Asia, have our candlesticks removed out of their place? And that, moreover, at a time, when we have the means and the opportunity of doing so much good to a world lying in wickedness? May God forbid. And indeed, dear brethren, we hope and have reason to expect better things.

“Nevertheless, we are not without our fears. Permit us to say, in the language of the apostle, ‘we are jealous over you with a godly jealousy.’ Our fears do not arise so much from any extensive dereliction of primitive principles already witnessed among you, as from other causes. We are growing numerous, and therefore in greater danger of divisions. God has, in a great degree, wiped away our reproach; and therefore we are in greater danger of pride, that bane of the Church, that destroyer of angels and men. Are we not also in danger of vain speculations, of reckoning upon our numbers, and of relaxing our rules, to accommodate carnal professors? And are we not, likewise, in danger of growing weary in holding, with a strict and steady hand, the reins of discipline? Do we, as preachers, feel the same child-like spirit, which so eminently distinguished some of our first ministers? Do we come to the people ‘in the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of peace?’ It is not enough merely to preach Gospel truth, but we must preach a *full* Gospel, from a full heart; and preach it, too, in demonstration of the Spirit and with power. Above all, do we insist upon the present witness of the Spirit, and upon entire sanctification through faith in Christ Jesus? As private members, are we denying self, and bearing the cross as formerly? Are we striving, by faith and obedience, to elevate our hearts and lives to the standard of Gospel holiness; or are we wishing to have that standard lowered down to our unsanctified natures? In short, are we contented to have the doctrine of Christian holiness an article of our creed only, without becoming experimentally and

practically acquainted with it; or are we pressing after it as the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus? Let us examine ourselves on these subjects, and so much the more, as we see the danger increasing—so much the more as we see our sphere of usefulness enlarging. If Methodists give up the doctrine of entire sanctification, or suffer it to become a dead letter, they are a fallen people. It is this that lays the axe to the root of the Antinomian tree, in all its forms and degrees of growth—it is this that inflames zeal, diffuses life, rouses to action, prompts to perseverance, and urges the soul forward to every holy exercise, and every useful work. If Methodists lose sight of this doctrine, they will fall by their own weight. Their successes, in gaining numbers, will be the cause of their dissolution. Holiness is the main cord that binds us together. Relax this, and you loosen the whole system. This will appear the more evident, if we call to mind the original design of Methodism. It was *to raise up and preserve a holy people*. This was the principal object which Mr. Wesley, who, under God, was the great founder of our order, had in view. To this end all the doctrines believed and preached by Methodists tend. And the rules of our Discipline, and the peculiar usages of our Church, were all instituted with the same design. Who ever supposed, or who that is acquainted with it can suppose, that our system was designed, in any of its parts, to secure the applause and popularity of the world, or a numerical increase of worldly or impenitent men? Is there any provision made for the aggrandizement of our ministers, or the worldly-mindedness of our members? The reverse of all this is true of both our doctrine and discipline. They make no provision for the flesh. They forbid conformity to the world, and enjoin humility, self-denial and a close walk with God.

“Whenever, therefore, we, as a people, have any other object in view, in our ecclesiastical associations and regula-

tions, than that for which our institutions were originally designed, that moment these institutions will become not only useless, but offensive. We shall wish them out of the way, and others substituted more congenial with our views and wishes. A change will, of course, be attempted; and whether such attempts succeed or fail, the consequences will, in any case, be serious, perhaps fatal. For, in our reasonings, and speculations, and strifes, on this subject, we shall forget 'to strengthen,' even 'the things that remain,' and that are ready to die. Thus will our spiritual downfall be certain, and our ruin as a Church inevitable. To this idea, beloved brethren, we would particularly call your attention. We have before stated, that, as we were becoming numerous, we were in danger of divisions, because among so many there would be a diversity of opinions. And we have just now alluded to a speculative spirit, about modes of Church government, and a restless desire for change, to which we, as a Church, are opposed, and which originates in our attending too little to the spirit and design of our institutions. This, we have already stated, tends, in its consequences, to final ruin. Now, whether this dissatisfaction and speculative disposition be owing to either of the above causes, or whether it be owing to both, is not perhaps easily to be determined. One thing, however, is certain, such a disposition has in some instances shown itself in our Church. And whatever may be the cause, even though it should be what might appear to some, a manifest defect in some of our institutions, still the consequences are to be dreaded. Yea, notwithstanding the symptoms of this spirit are confined to a few, still it is a contagious spirit; and when it once commences, there is danger of its spreading. And the same, or different causes, may operate to make it general. And we could not, dear brethren, without pain, see the Church generally agitated on this subject. It is to be dreaded as the spirit of death. You will, therefore,

bear with us, while we caution you against it, by several considerations.

“1. As has been before stated, where this spirit is indulged, the spirit of devotion proportionably declines. When it progresses to any considerable extent, so as to enlist the feelings and excite the attention of the members generally, farewell to a growth of grace and to the work of reformation. The most important part of the Gospel is lost in contentions about things of minor consequence. This is evident from general experience. None need any farther proof of it than to mark the effect in themselves, or in their societies, if these questions have been agitated among them.

“2. This spirit endangers the safety of the Church. Divisions are formed, prejudices, party feelings, mutual recriminations, and dangerous and distressing schisms are the painful results. This would undoubtedly be our situation, if we should attempt a general or a radical change. If we should give up the original plan on which we set out, could we ever get our people, scattered as they are over so vast an extent of country, and combining such a variety of views and prejudices, to agree upon a new system? No. It would be chimerical in the extreme to expect it. The petitions and memorials that came before the last General conference, prove that there could be no such union of views effected. Whenever, therefore, we give up our old system, and set ourselves afloat upon the waves of speculation, and risk our all upon the experiment of a revolution of our plan, we that moment put an end to the union, the strength, and the glory of the Methodist Church. Reference to the history of the Church will show, that reformations in Church government have heretofore been effected in connection with a reform in morals and religion. Reformers, like Luther and Wesley, have come out from a corrupt Church, and begun to preach a pure doctrine. When they succeeded in making converts, they put them,

if they wished to unite with them, under a pure government and discipline. And thus they effected a reform. But we believe no religious sects, after they have become numerous, have ever effected any considerable changes in their Church governments, and at the same time preserved the unity of the body. Many attempts to do this have been made, and many convulsions and divisions have been the result. Let us shun the rocks on which so many have been wrecked.

“3. We exhort you, brethren, to give yourselves no anxieties about changes in your system, from the consideration, that such anxieties are unnecessary. What people has God blessed like the Methodists? What institutions has he more generally owned than theirs? If, then, we have those institutions, those doctrines and that form of government which God has remarkably owned and blessed, and which he still owns and blesses, and under which our numbers have greatly increased and are still increasing, what more can we expect—what more can we desire? It is not pretended, however, that our system is perfect; nor will we go so far as to say, no alterations will ever be needed. But there is one consideration connected with this subject that deserves our particular attention, and will, we think, go far to confirm the idea that all anxieties and exertions for a change are unnecessary. It is this: our present form of Church government is providential. It is not, in the great whole, the effect of previous design; but the result of a chain of providences, which have led us on, step by step, to our present system of government. Now, if any alterations are necessary, to accommodate any change which may have taken place in the progress of our work, and in the increase and extent of our societies, the same providential hand, which has led us on hitherto, will still direct us in the right way. Here we may all rest with safety. If we live humbly and holy—if, by prayer, we commend the Church to God, invoke his aid, and press forward in his

service, will he not go before us and direct our steps? Most assuredly he will. In the day of prosperity, he will go before us in a pillar of cloud, and in the night of adversity in a pillar of fire. And whithersoever he leads, the Church may follow, with confidence and safety. No need then of any anxiety—no need of any collision on this subject. All such collisions and anxieties are premature and useless, and, therefore, unsafe. It is a vain attempt to push things out of their natural course, and change the order of God's providence.

“Having said this much upon the subject of speculations and contentions about changes and reforms in our ecclesiastical institutions, it becomes us to say, that we do not mean, by these remarks, to inculcate upon you an indifference to your rights and privileges as a religious community. None ought to submit to the authority of any Church, without approving of its doctrines and discipline. This, in becoming members of the Methodist Church, you have done. And the privileges guaranteed to you in that Church, you ought to claim and to contend for in the spirit of Christian love. If any essential alteration has been made, or if any should be made, without your consent, you have a right to remonstrate, and we will use our influence to have your grievances redressed. In truth, brethren, the prominent features of Methodism are so guarded by the restrictive rules in your Discipline, limiting the powers of the General conference, that so long as these are considered sacred, the essential principles of your religion cannot be easily changed. You thus have secured to you your articles of faith and standard of doctrines, the general rules of the societies, the privilege of trial by a committee, and the right of an appeal. In these respects, then, you have little to fear. We doubt not, dear brethren, but injuries may have been sustained by you, as individuals and as societies, in some instances, by the indiscretion and in experi-

ence of those who have administered discipline among you. These injuries, we hope, will be avoided in future. As our societies and preachers grow older, we shall have less occasion to put young and inexperienced men in charge. And we would particularly advise you all to make yourselves acquainted with your rights as Methodists, and with the rules by which you are to be governed. Then, if any in office step aside from their duty, you will know it, and claim your rights. And if they persist in it, you can represent them to those to whom they are accountable. Unless you willingly submit to usurpation, you cannot be oppressed. We exhort you, brethren, while some are contending for greater rights, as they suppose, to be careful and improve those you have. If we, as a people, ever fall, which may Heaven prevent, it will not be because we have so few rights and privileges in our Church, but because we do not improve those we have. Never, since the apostles' days, has a Christian denomination been more highly favored: therefore, much is required at our hands. And are those among us that complain, the most diligent to avail themselves of the blessings they do possess? Are not many too negligent in this respect? We exhort you, brethren, to be faithful in your private and social duties: forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, especially in your classes. Much is lost by our inattention to this duty. Let none of your excellent institutions languish. If you grow negligent of these peculiar privileges of your Church, such neglect will be at once both the symptom and cause of backsliding. 'Keep yourselves in the love of God.' And remember, whatever else you have or have not, there is one *right* which none can wrest from you, and which, as Methodists, you have great helps to enjoy—we mean, the right to the *exceeding great and precious promises*, whereby you may be made partakers of the *Divine nature*, and escape the corruption that is in the world, through lust. And these

promises, properly embraced by faith, will give you a *right to the tree of life, and ye shall enter in through the gates into the city.*

“And now, brethren, we press upon you, one and all, preachers and people, as you prize your own spiritual life—as you value the souls of the rising generation intrusted to your care—as you regard the peace of the Church—as you feel for a perishing world, lay aside every trifling speculation, and attend to the great work of saving your own souls, and the souls of your fellow men.

“Live in peace. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and we pray God that your whole spirit and soul and body, may be preserved blameless, unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.”

The Bishop was always either too modest, or constitutionally averse, to proclaim who he was when he arrived in any place. We have a capital and somewhat amusing instance of this, in the following narrative, furnished us from the pen of Bishop Morris, to whom Bishop Roberts narrated it in 1837, when Bishop Morris was on a visit to his house in Indiana. The precise time and place of the occurrence, if named by Bishop Roberts, are not recollected by the writer of the anecdote:

“Bishop Roberts, once traveling on horse-back along a road with which he was unacquainted, inquired for a quiet house of entertainment where he might spend the night; and on recommendation, went to one without knowing the character of the man that kept it, but who he subsequently learned was a local preacher of his own denomination. He obtained leave to stay all night; and supper was provided for him; shortly after which, the landlord lit a candle, placed it in a lantern, and, when about going out of the house, said to the Bishop, ‘If you wish to retire before we return, you

can take a bed in the adjoining room: we are going to a meeting.'

"*Bishop.* 'What sort of a meeting is it?'

"*Landlord.* 'It is what we Methodists call a class meeting.'

"*B.* 'I should like to go along, if it would not be intruding.'

"*L.* 'No intrusion at all: we allow serious persons to attend class meeting a few times, without becoming members, if they wish.'

"They proceeded together to the meeting, which was well attended. The class-leader was a young man of much zeal and little experience. After speaking to all the members, he came to the Bishop, when the following conversation ensued:

"*L.* 'Well, stranger, have you any desire to serve the Lord, and get to heaven?'

"*B.* 'I have such a desire.'

"*L.* 'How long have you had this desire?'

"*B.* 'I cannot say precisely how long now, but for many years.'

"*L.* 'Well, do you think, old gentleman, that you know any thing about the enjoyment of experimental religion?'

"*B.* 'Yes, brother, I trust I do know, and have known a long time, what experimental religion is; though I acknowledge I have not been as faithful as I should have been; and, consequently, have not made that progress in religion which it was my privilege to have made. Still I have a good hope in the mercy of God, through Christ, that I shall be saved in heaven at last.'

"The leader closed the exercises himself, in the usual way, and the Bishop returned with his host in silence. After they had been seated a short time, a small table was placed in the room with a Bible and hymn book. The landlord, after deep study, looked at the Bible, then at the

Bishop, and again seemed to be in a deep study. After a few more side glances, he rose, and started toward the table; then stopped, cleared his throat, and went to the door and spit; then turned again toward the table; but finally stopped, and said to the Bishop, 'Old gentleman, you appear to be a man that knows something of religion: it is our practice here to have family worship: perhaps you would be willing to read and pray with us?'

"*B.* 'I have no objection, brother, if you wish it.'

"He proceeded to read, sing, and pray, in his own impressive manner. The landlord then took a candle and showed him his room; and started out, got to the door, stopped, turned round, hesitated, and finally remarked, 'Old gentleman, if it would be no offense, I should like to know your name?'

"*B.* 'No offense at all, brother: my name is Robert R. Roberts.'

"When the Bishop related this anecdote to the writer, he added, 'And they paid me well for telling my name; for they detained me two days, and made me preach several times.' I wished him to tell me how the young class-leader looked about the close of his first sermon, but he declined making any comments."

Bishop Roberts attended the Mississippi conference, at Tuscaloosa, Alabama, December 22, 1824. On the closing evening of the old year, and the morning of the new, he wrote the following letter to his brother Lewis. From it we learn that his temporal concerns were by no means in a flourishing condition:

"Although it is the last night of the old year, and is quite late, yet I feel desirous to write you a few lines before I go to rest. I have waited till this late hour, in the expectation that I would hear from you and my family before I left this place; but now my hopes are fled: in the morning I start for the South Carolina conference, in com-

pany with Bishop Soule. Old Sorrel has left me at last, or I have left him; for he is dead. I have purchased another horse, for which I gave ninety dollars; and yet I fear he will not be able to carry me long. At any rate it makes the funds run low.

“We have had a very pleasant conference, and some increase the last year. The work is spreading, and we have sent three missionaries from this conference: one to Mobile, one to New Orleans, and one to the Choctaw Indians. There have, also, three been sent from the Tennessee conference to labor among the Cherokees. Thus the Lord is opening the door for the spread of the Gospel on every side.

“I have had many exercises of mind since I left home. I wrote to you from Knoxville, and told you how matters stood in reference to my concerns. I then had some hope that I would have returned from this place, but present circumstances forbid it; and I cannot now say, with any degree of certainty, when I shall return. Tell Betsey, my health is good, and I pray for her happiness night and day. Tell Sophia and Nancy, that I want them to take the labor of the house entirely on themselves, so that their aunt may be free from care. Tell James and George, to keep plenty of wood and meal in the house, and do all they can to accommodate their aunt, and make her life comfortable and happy. And O, my brother, exhort them all to serve the Lord, and walk in the way of his commandments. It is now nearly midnight, and my old friend, the year eighteen hundred and twenty-four, is about to expire. God grant that our old sins may expire with it, so that they may trouble us no more for ever; and in the new year, may we be new creatures in Christ Jesus. Amen, and Amen.

“P. S. It is now January 1st, 1825. I thought I should have closed my letter last night; but I still keep writing, and I labor for language, this morning, to express

the desire I have for your prosperity. Receive my good wishes, on this auspicious morn, for yourself and family. Farewell."

The subjoined letter was also written by Bishop Roberts to his brother Lewis. It was sent from Milledgeville, Georgia, and bears the date of January 19, 1825. It is somewhat similar in its character to the one just given, showing that his pecuniary resources were exceedingly limited.

"These lines will inform you that I am now in the capital of Georgia, and that Bishop Soule is with me. We start to-morrow for Sparta; and thence we shall proceed to Augusta. There we expect to part. He intends going by Charleston, South Carolina, and I purpose going by Columbia and Camden; we expect to meet at Fayetteville, the seat of the South Carolina conference. After the Virginia conference is over, I think I shall return home. My mind is somewhat perplexed on account of the situation in which our affairs stand in the Land Office. I suppose you understood that I was not able to make any transfer; it required forty-five or fifty dollars to close the account; and that sum I had not with me to spare. I then thought that I should be able to return before the expiration of the time, but now it is somewhat doubtful. Beside, the purchase of a horse and saddle has taken so much of my disposable funds, that I know not whether I shall be able to meet my other engagements, after settling matters in the Land Office; and I know not but what I am considerably indebted to you and John, for work done in the bottom. If John has made the rails we agreed for, I am anxious to pay him on my return. I desire also to be able to meet my engagement with Lindsay, as he is just entering into business; for if he were disappointed, it might be a very great injury to him.

"But perhaps I am too much taken up with temporal matters, and not sufficiently engaged in the great work of

my holy and heavenly calling. Our religious condition in this quarter, is as good as we could expect to find it, when we consider that the great presidential question has affected every part of our Union, and no part more than this. The winter, so far, has been very mild; the weather has been cloudy; we have had much rain; and the waters have frequently been very high. I have traveled with ease and comfort, considering the difficulties that I had to encounter. My health has been uniformly good, and my spirits much refreshed from the consideration that these difficulties will not always last, but in due season I shall reap if I faint not. I hope while I am laboring in the cause of Zion, that my family are doing well at home. I intend, till after the sitting of the next conference, to write to you at every convenient opportunity. It is almost dark, and I have to go to the meeting-house this evening; so I come to a close. Give my good wishes to Peggy, and the children; and accept them yourself: Betsey is always remembered by me. Tell her, I think of her daily in my prayers. Sophia, James, and George, with all the rest of my relations, are the subjects of my prayers also. Farewell."

The following letter, from Rev. Wm. Stevenson to Bishop Roberts, written October, 1825, will give some idea of the state of the Church in Arkansas, at that period. Arkansas had then but one district and five circuits, and only three preachers besides brother Stevenson, the presiding elder, who also, we presume, traveled the Arkansas circuit.

"Being deprived of attending your annual conference, I take this method of giving you some information of the work of God, as far as it has come under my notice, during the past year. Sometime last winter, perhaps in December, I received my appointment as missionary, and also as presiding elder, ex-officio, for the district of Arkansas, from your secretary, brother Scripps. These appointments surprised me, knowing that the Superintendent was aware of my

failure the past year, through bodily inability. But I thought it a duty that I owed to God and the Church, to endeavor to fill those appointments as far as I could.

“ With respect to the fruits of my labors as a missionary, I have reason to believe that they have been very much hindered by my appointment to the care of the district. I have, however, made three tours this year amongst the people that I visited last year, between Red River and Washitau, below latitude 33° , where I have had reason to praise God for some fruits of my labors. I have organized societies amongst them. We have forty members: leaders are appointed; and they are going on well, and seem to be pleased with Methodism. I also visited the town of Natchitoches, on Red River, and some part of the country lying south and west of said town, where, under preaching, displays of the Divine power were frequently witnessed, and many of the people seem to be athirst for the word. We have about thirty members on that side of the Red River bordering on the Spanish line, and a goodly number of them are happy in God. Here is sufficient ground for a four weeks' circuit; and the people earnestly solicit the attention of the Bishops, hoping they will send them a circuit preacher or missionary, who will labor on both sides of Red River, and also in the town of Natchitoches, as it is situated about the centre of the circuit. We have no doubt but good may be done in that place by one who knows how to win souls to God. Observe, that the above circuit will be connected with the Mississippi conference, as it is south of latitude 33° , and in the state of Louisiana.

“ As to the work in Arkansas district, it has not been so great as we could have wished; but we have had many precious times at our camp meetings. Souls have been converted to God. Whole congregations have been so overawed by the Divine presence, that in general we have had very few disorderly people. I think you will find from

the returns of the preachers, that there has been a considerable addition of members this year.

“As regards my own experience, I can say I know that I have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and think I have enjoyed a more constant sense of the Divine presence during the last year than I ever did before. I am at this time very unwell, and only just able to sit and write at intervals. I have been afflicted with a fever for four days past, which I fear will deprive me of the privilege of attending my two last camp meetings. But I wish to be resigned to my lot; and in my severest pains and fevers, I know God is with me. Glory to his name, I have a desire to continue in the itinerant field, and submit myself to any appointment that may be assigned me. If I were to make a choice, it would be that of a missionary, as I am happy in discharging the duties of that office. I will, however, make no such choice, but say, the will of the Lord be done. I have given myself to the Lord for the ensuing year, and will not retract.”

After the Bishop's return from the Missouri conference, about the last of August, 1825, the following incident occurred: The Rev. J. Tarkington, Rev. J. Armstrong, and Rev. G. Randall, on their way to the Illinois conference, which sat that year at Madison, Indiana, called at the house of Bishop Roberts. Mr. Randall being an Englishman, was very desirous of seeing one of the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He had formed his views of a Bishop and a Bishop's residence, in some degree, from what he had seen among the English prelates. When he came in sight of the Bishop's dwelling, he found, to his great surprise, that the American Bishop lived on a farm in a retired part of the country, and in a very common house, where there was nothing to dazzle the eye, and, moreover, where every person was at work! The Bishop not being in the house on their arrival, Mrs. Roberts informed Mr.

Armstrong where he was, and also where they could find feed for their horses. After the horses had been duly attended to by the three clerical visitors, and all were seated in the room, the English brother manifested much uneasiness to see the Bishop. Mr. Armstrong requested him to be composed, as the Bishop would soon arrive. Still he would walk out; but nevertheless no Bishop could be seen. As the Bishop had just returned from the Missouri conference, he was much fatigued, and his horse, though a noble animal, was nearly rode down. When in sight, Mr. Armstrong observed that the Bishop was coming. The Englishman looked out with great interest, but observed that he saw no Bishop. "Look in the grass lot," said Mr. Armstrong. He looked again, and remarked, rather impatiently, "I see a man there, but no Bishop." "But that is certainly the Bishop," said Mr. Armstrong. "No! no!" he replied, "that cannot be, for the man is in his shirt sleeves." By this time the Bishop arrived, and all the guests were introduced to him. The remarks that had been passed on him were told the Bishop. He soon entered on a pleasant and lively conversation with all of them; and the rest of the day was spent much to the satisfaction of the visitors.

The benevolence of Bishop Roberts was entirely too strong and expansive for his means of contributing to charitable objects. Though his annual income was small, his property of very little value, and several of his relatives, who made his house their home, drew from his limited stores; yet he was always ready to distribute, though by this he might curtail his own comforts, and even his very conveniences and necessities. We have a striking instance, illustrative of this, in the brief narrative given below. It was kindly furnished us by Bishop Morris, as he received it from authentic sources. We will introduce it by remarking, that the Bishop attended the Mississippi con-

ference at Washington, Mississippi, which sat December 8th, 1825.

“In the winter of perhaps 1825 and 1826, Bishop Roberts, having met his conferences, visited New Orleans. The brethren there were making an effort to build a small frame chapel. Their means were very limited; and the Bishop, in order to aid them, sold his horse for one hundred dollars, presented the whole amount to the trustees, and took passage on a steamboat for Louisville. On the way up the Mississippi, one very cold night, the boat struck a snag, which broke through the hull. The captain called for blankets to secure the breach; Bishop Roberts promptly flung down blanket, bed, and all, and made the best preparation he could for his own safety. The boat soon sank, but the passengers all got safe on shore. The remainder of the cold, cheerless night, was spent on the uninhabited coast. Next morning, Bishop Roberts shouldered his baggage, and set off on foot up the river. After walking about seven miles, he came to a settlement, where, with the small amount of funds he had left, he bought a pony and an old Spanish saddle, and turned down the coast so as to intersect the road from Vicksburg to Nashville. The pony being unequal to his burden, soon gave out. This was a new difficulty, as the Bishop’s funds were insufficient to buy another. Necessity, however, is fruitful in inventing means, and he exchanged the tired pony for a mare, which had a stiff neck, and carried her head on one side near the ground, on account of which she was valued low, though a stont animal. *Old Crook-neck* carried him safely through the Indian country to Nashville, where the brethren kindly furnished him with a better horse and equipage, and likewise money to pay his expenses home.”

Among the letters in the possession of Bishop Roberts, we find one from the Rev. Alexander M’Caine, dated July 6th, 1826. Mr. M’Caine, at this time, was preparing his

attack on the Methodist Episcopal Church. The letter contains the elements of those unfounded and ever false charges, which were afterward drawn out into a large pamphlet, entitled "The History and Mystery of Methodist Episcopacy." The annals of the world, perhaps, do not furnish a list of accusations of a more false and virulent character than these of Mr. M'Caine. There are, however, some who have ever taken his unfounded suspicions as history. The attacks of Mr. Annan and Mr. Musgrave, in opposition to the clearest testimony from authentic history, are based on the supposition that the gross misstatements of Mr. M'Caine are unquestioned and unquestionable truths. To such men it is difficult to give an answer, as their rancorous malice makes them blind to all truth, or even right, except what their violent prejudices may allow. To argue with them would be the same as meeting the accusations of the arch-liar with grave and sober argument and reason. Perhaps all that can or ought to be done with opponents of this description, is to follow the example of Michael, the archangel, when contending with Satan, by simply saying, "The Lord rebuke thee."

But the British Methodists have always admired the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church; and they now speak of it as the form of Church polity which Mr. Wesley himself chose for and recommended to the American Methodists. Indeed, it is in the Methodist Episcopal Church organization alone, that the embodiment of Mr. Wesley's view of Scriptural Church polity can be found. Mr. Dixon, in his sermon on the "Origin, economy and present position of Methodism," expresses his own opinions, and those of the whole British Wesleyan Church, in regard to the Methodist Episcopal Church, in the following words:

"When the United States had effected their emancipation from the mother country, Mr. Wesley considered him-

self at liberty to act with perfect freedom in the new territory, and, we may say, to develop his views and opinions fully; and, if we mistake not, it is to the American Methodist Episcopal Church that we are to look for the *real* mind and sentiments of this great man. Obstructions removed, he instantly seized the opportunity of appointing an entire Church system, on the principle of moderate episcopacy. And if we may judge of the wisdom and piety of the design by its usefulness and success, certainly we shall be prepared to consider it most providential. No Church in modern times has made any thing like the progress which is seen in this branch of our community. But the question was introduced, not so much to state the amount of success which followed the establishment of this scheme, as to point out the principle of adaptation observable in its adoption. We see, in this case, that when it was discovered to be essential to the well being and growth of a particular section of the body, a somewhat different form of discipline and order should be established from that which existed at home, the thing was at once effected.

“It was in this body, (the British conference,) in 1769, that the ‘wants of our American brethren were considered, and the question asked, “Who is willing to go?” Two of our preachers, Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmoor, made the offer. They were sent, with fifty pounds for the chapel, and twenty pounds for their own expenses.’ This unaffected question, ‘Who will go?’ the answer from two brethren, ‘Send us,’ and the sum of twenty pounds given for the general purposes of their mission, led to the organization of a Church which, if not so already, is likely to become the greatest Protestant body in the world. We speak advisedly in this. Taking into account the present numbers and position of the ‘American Methodist Episcopal Church’—the wide area of the United States—the rapidly increasing population of the country—the adaptation

of their system to meet the wants of a scattered and new population—and, above all, the completeness of their Church order, which is evidently looked upon with affectionate and loyal veneration on the part of the people—we are furnished with moral *data* for the conclusion, that the American Methodist Church must, in the ordinary course of things, become one of the greatest, if not the very greatest, united Protestant body in the world.

“It is true, that this Church can only be considered as in its infancy; but the progress already made, and the spirit by which it is animated, unite to indicate the certainty and rapidity of its growth. With thirty-three annual conferences—nearly one million of Church members, (now more than a million)—a religious influence extending to about five millions of the population—almost four thousand ordained ministers—and upward of seven thousand local preachers—besides twenty colleges, and one university, for the promotion of education on strictly Christian principles, in union with the Church—we say, all these, in connection with the peculiar character of the country, present an aspect of promise which can leave no doubt on the mind as to the future. These societies extend through the whole Union; the continent itself is the base of this mighty moral operation; the older and more populous cities yield their portion of pious communicants; but the remote wildernesses, cultivated by the laborious evangelists of the cross, are equally fruitful. These young communities are laying the foundation of future events, whether religious or otherwise, of great consequence. It is the seed-time of their existence; and generations unborn, to the latest periods, must reap the harvest. This is the exact position of America at present. Her widely extended—almost illimitable—territory will be filled with living man; her remaining forests will yield to the aggressions of civilization, and present successive harvests to industrious husbandry; the noble and magnificent

rivers which sweep through her territories will bear on their banks an unthought of population; in fact, it is easy to see that a country so vast, varied, rich in resources, and capable of every kind of advancement, and occupied, withal, by the enterprising children of our own country, must advance to a greatness equal to any thing the world ever saw. In this state of incipient being, the first occupants of the soil, as religious teachers, secure a great advantage. This is possessed, not exclusively, yet very extensively, by our American brethren. Led on by their zeal and devotedness to God, they have followed the scattered settlers to their distant abodes; and, in the midst of privations, labors, and difficulties, such as might make the stoutest hearts quail, they have carried the '*glad tidings of great joy*' to these destitute people, and at the same time laid the foundations of that Church which we see rising in such beautiful proportions, magnificence, and grandeur. Thus, blending with the very elements of society, in its young and vigorous pulsations, Methodism will, at least in its forms, expand with the social body. May its doctrines, its spirit, and its experimental features, equally grow!"

The ensuing letter, addressed to Bishop Roberts, gives some interesting events, which will be read with satisfaction. It was written by Bishop M'Kendree, at Baltimore, and bears the date of July 5th, 1826:

"My health is strangely improved. I have attended the Virginia, Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, and Genesee conferences, and am so far on my way to the south, in good health. Thanks be to God for his long continued goodness!

"We were greatly disappointed in not seeing you in Baltimore last spring. No messenger appointed to England. Nothing done on any subject! If you wish for particulars apply to Bishop Soule.

"The preachers received and treated me kindly, par-

ticularly at the Genesee conference. The business has been conducted in a peaceable and agreeable way at all the conferences that I have attended; and, upon the whole, the Church is encouraged to be thankful, and to hope for better days. Could the preachers be provoked to a more energetic and uniform administration of our Discipline, all would soon be *well*. I have just received a long letter from our friend and brother, Reece, in England, with some interesting remarks on discipline. He presents his affectionate regard to you.

“Our missionary system has been touched in this quarter. For particulars I refer you to Bishop Soule. I hope it will triumph; but its success very much depends on the Bishops. The constitution of our missionary society, like our itinerant system, and the holy Scriptures, authorizes us to send missionaries, or preachers, to the poor and destitute, wherever they are found; but it does not command us to do so. In this respect, we are invested with a discretionary power, and held responsible for the exercise of that power. Therefore, I would say,

“1. We should judiciously select the field for missionaries who are to be supported from the funds collected for that purpose. We are particularly amenable for the application of those funds. The work should be extended in the ordinary way of our itinerant operations, as far as practicable, in order to improve the funds to the best advantage with those who cannot be reached in this way.

“2. The missionaries should be carefully selected. Men should be appointed who are best qualified to carry the design of the mission into effect: that is, to carry the saving truths of the Gospel to the poor and destitute—not to accommodate the poor or debilitated minister.

“3. At each conference, let the Bishops attend to the state of the missions within its bounds, make necessary arrangements, give suitable instructions, and immediately

report to the mother society the state, the changes, and all the interesting particulars relative to each station; and enjoin it on the superintending missionaries respectively, to give quarterly information to the Bishops, and to the corresponding secretary, respecting the state and progress of the missions under their care, together with profitable anecdotes, in interesting matter extracted from their journals, as they may judge profitable and proper. From this let the editors extract for the magazine and missionary notices. In this way, connected with particular information, the auxiliary and branch societies will be furnished with matter for their reports; while the Church and the public will be informed of what is doing, and thereby stimulated to help us to carry on the good work.

“Notwithstanding our opposers write and talk much, our prospects are much more encouraging than they have been. I would visit all the conferences if I could.

“I could say much, but it is not necessary. You will have interviews with our beloved brother Armstrong, and Bishop Soule, and hear by the word of mouth. Be sure to visit Baltimore next spring, and see how they do.

“My respects to sister Roberts. Farewell.”

The subjoined letter was sent by Bishop Soule to Bishop Roberts, from Cincinnati, and is dated July 16, 1827, the day on which Bishop Soule met with M'Caine's pamphlet. The perusal of his first impressions relative to this slanderous work will be gratifying to the reader.

“I left Baltimore on the 11th of May, and arrived in Cincinnati, with my family, in ten days, exclusive of the Sabbath, on which we did not travel, spending one in Hagerstown, and the other in Wheeling. My family is as well as usual, and settled, for the present, in Lebanon.

“We had a remarkable pleasant time on our journey, and did not sustain the least injury or unfavorable incident, either with respect to ourselves, carriages or horses. Bishop

M'Kendree accompanied us to Uniontown, at the rate of from thirty-five to forty miles a day, and endured the travel very well. He has since been to Sandusky, on horse-back, being obliged to leave his carriage and traveling companion at Lancaster, in consequence of the failure of his sorrel horse. He came through Urbana, Xenia, Lebanon, and on to Chillicothe in the same manner, where he met the carriage, with the lame horse then nearly recovered.

“If my health, which is but feeble at present, and providential circumstances will admit, I should wish to attend the ensuing session of the Missouri conference. If you will write me a line to Lebanon, and let me know the day you will set out for St. Louis, I will, in case I go, call at your house, and accompany you. Mr. M'Caine's book, purporting to prove that the government of the Methodist Episcopal Church has been ‘surreptitiously’ introduced, without the recommendation or approval of Mr. Wesley, has, at last, made its appearance. The author has made a free use of the names and acts of the present Superintendents, especially the three seniors, M'K., G., and R. I have, this morning, read the work from beginning to end, consisting of between seventy and eighty octavo pages, closely printed. I think him exceedingly vulnerable in all the important points which he attempts to establish, and that less than half the number of pages, in answer, might furnish a complete refutation of every point where the *validity* of the government, or the *honesty* of Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury are called in question. Yours, with much esteem and affection.”

At the General conference of 1828, no new Bishops were elected, in consequence of which the labors of the Bishops, at that time in the Church, were truly onerous. This drew from three of them, M'Kendree, Roberts, and Soule, the following expression of opinion. The document was written at Pittsburg, and is dated May 23, 1828.

“Such is the debility of several of the Bishops, and such

the extent and weight of the episcopal charge, that we think it would be incompatible with the present state of things, and highly improper, to increase the labors of the general Superintendents, by constituting any new conference under the existing circumstances; and that it ought not to be done without the concurrence of a majority of the Bishops."

On the occasion of the death of Bishop George, the following letter was also written by Bishop Soule to Bishop Roberts. It has the date of October 6, 1828, and was sent from Lebanon, Ohio.

"My tour to Missouri was very wearisome, but the conference was peaceful and pleasant. All things considered, the prospects are encouraging. The death of our dear colleague, Bishop George, will, as a matter of course, derange our plan of operation, and render it necessary for us to meet and make an arrangement for our future labors. I would have been with you at Madison, but for the existence of circumstances which I could not control.

"As you will be in the neighborhood of the Kentucky conference, I presume it will not be very inconvenient for you to meet me there, when we can fix on a plan to fill up the work in the best way possible. Please to write me a line immediately on receiving this, and let me know if you will meet me there, and if you purpose going directly from Madison to Shelbyville, so as to be present at the opening of the conference. If so, I think I would spend the Sabbath previous to the conference in Cincinnati and come in the second day.

"Yours, with much affection and esteem."

We are indebted to the excellent sermon of the Rev. Calvin Ruter, for the annexed very interesting account illustrative of the "equanimity and self-possession" of the Bishop. It is a letter from Dr. J. H. Brower, to the author of the sermon.

"DEAR SIR,—An incident having occurred in my inter-

course with the late venerated and lamented Bishop Roberts, strongly illustrative of his characteristic equanimity and self-possession, and at the same time an instance of a remarkable providential preservation from a most imminent peril, I have thought that it might be interesting to you to have the particulars of the occurrence :

“ In the spring of the year 1828 or 1829, the good Bishop stopped at my house at Elizabethtown, Ohio, on his way from his residence in Indiana to Cincinnati. As a quarterly meeting was to commence the next day, he was persuaded to remain during its progress, and he preached two or three times, to the great delight and profit of a large audience. I well remember one discourse which he preached at sun-rise on Sabbath morning, from the eighth verse of the 57th Psalm, ‘ Awake up, my glory : awake psaltery and harp : I myself will awake early.’ The unwonted hour of public worship, the impressiveness and patriarchal simplicity of his manner, and the earnestness and force with which he set forth the duty of a constant spirit of thankfulness, gave his sermon an effect which, I doubt not, many of his hearers have never forgotten ; and, in connection with the incidents of the following day, have left an impression on my own mind as vivid and fresh as if it had transpired but yesterday. The Miami and Whitewater Rivers, which it was necessary for him to cross in order to get to his appointment at Cincinnati on Monday evening, were then unusually high, so that the ferries at the usual places had been obstructed for several days ; and, as he manifested a great anxiety to go on, I proposed to him to set him over both rivers, below their junction, in a small flat-boat, which I used for my private convenience at that point, and where I supposed we might cross in perfect safety. Accordingly, on Monday morning the good Bishop, with the mail-carrier, (who had been waiting for several days to get over the streams,) went on to the mouth of Whitewater, where the ferry-flat lay ;

and, with two men who usually took me over, and myself as steersman, we embarked: the current was exceedingly rapid, and when about two-thirds of the distance across, (the rowers laboring with all their strength at the oars,) the lower oar suddenly snapped in twain! Thus leaving us at the mercy of the raging stream. As we were rapidly floating toward a large mass of drift-wood lodged just below us, against which had we struck, we should in an instant have been dashed to pieces, the only alternative was to steer the boat among a number of large trees, partly under water, and some thirty or forty feet from the shore. This we attempted; and instantly, as the gunwale of the boat struck a tree, the force of the current against the upper side pressed it down, so that the water poured over it in mass, and filled it almost in a moment. At this fearful juncture, I cried out to the Bishop to let go his horse and drive him overboard, which he did promptly, while a blow from the broken oar drove the mail-carrier's horse after him. By this expedient the load of the boat was so lightened that, by great exertion, it was pushed off from the tree, and got to the shore, full of water, and in a moment after sunk. The horses made their way to the shore some two hundred yards below us uninjured, the mail bags only being lost.

“ During this fearful crisis, the Bishop maintained a perfect calmness and self-command, to which, in a great degree, we owed our preservation. And, upon our reaching the shore, he quietly spread out his handkerchief on the wet and muddy ground, and kneeling down, several minutes elapsed before his or our own overflowing hearts (overwhelmed with a sense of Divine mercy and goodness in our wonderful preservation from a watery grave) could give utterance to our feelings. He then broke out in the beautiful language of the 46th Psalm, ‘ God is our refuge and strength; a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried

into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled.' And then, in a strain of thanksgiving, poured out such a burst of grateful acknowledgment for, and reliance upon, the sustaining and preserving mercies of God, as befitted the solemnity of the occasion and the greatness of the escape. Then addressing me, he said, 'My brother, the Lord has work for us to do yet, and has yet mercies in store for us. Let us learn never to distrust his power or willingness to preserve, and *never to shrink from the straight forward path of duty, or the work to which he has appointed us.* "Commit thy way unto him, and he shall bring it to pass."' After accompanying the holy man to a neighboring house, where he was hospitably received, and drying his wet garments, he went on his way, and reached his appointment in season, leaving an impression upon my mind, which the lapse of time has never lessened, that, under Divine providence, to his own quiet and assured deportment and self-command, and the influence which these had upon us all, we owed our preservation from one of the most imminent scenes of peril which it has ever been my lot to witness or partake in.

"In frequent subsequent interviews, the good Bishop would revert to the scene, and always with the remark that his work was not then done, and that a special design for good was intended in Divine mercy by our singular preservation."

Mr. Ruter, in commenting on the foregoing incident, says, "We have here brought to view the true principle of his fearless perseverance in the path of duty—a firm confidence in, and reliance upon the power and goodness of God. This is, indeed, the principle of all moral courage; and it was this which enabled our venerated Bishop to meet danger, and to face opposition without fear; for he never quailed in presence of the most violent and determined opposers of truth, but 'he endured as seeing Him who is invisible.'"

We make another extract from the sermon of Mr. Ruter, in which an incident is given exhibiting the Bishop's fine natural powers as a preacher, and the remarkable effect produced on his hearers when his lips were "touched with hallowed fire."

"I well recollect that, when attending the Missouri conference, which held its annual session in the city of St. Louis, in the fall of 1823, I became acquainted with an intelligent military officer of high rank, who, at that time, I think, had charge of a military post on the frontier, high up the Missouri River. On one occasion, while in conversation, he inquired if Bishop Roberts would be there during the sitting of the conference; and being informed that he would not, he expressed great regret, remarking that he had heard the Bishop preach once, and would go a considerable distance to enjoy the privilege again. He added, 'I was in the city when your conference held a previous session here, and learning that Bishop Roberts was to preach, I went to hear him. When I arrived, the chapel was so much crowded that it was with difficulty I obtained a seat just inside the door. I saw the Bishop sitting in the pulpit; but, having been out on a long frontier tour, (as I afterward learned,) his apparel looked rather rusty, and I did not suppose *that* could be he. At length he arose to begin the service. I then thought it probable that the Bishop was ill, and that this venerable looking man was put up to fill his place. I felt disappointed, but thought that I would wait a little, and hear what he had to say. He commenced reading, and I soon found I had mistaken my man. After the hymn was sung he knelt and prayed—*and such a prayer!* He read his text and commenced preaching, and I soon became so deeply interested in the speaker and his subject as to lose sight of every thing besides; and when I next came to myself, I found that I had insensibly arisen from my seat, pressed through the crowded aisle, and was standing near

the pulpit, my hands uplifted, my eyes and my *mouth* open, and I was weeping *with all my might*. And O, it did me so much good to weep! I verily thought that every body in the house was weeping too.' Such was the influence produced upon the mind of this gentleman, (and he, by the way, an irreligious man,) according to his own showing, by the heavenly eloquence which fell from the lips of our dear departed Roberts.

"But we need not go thus far to find living witnesses to the power and influence which attended his ministry. Many who hear me at this hour still remember, nay, they will never forget, in what melting strains of holy eloquence (when standing in the tented grove on the summit of a neighboring hill) he spoke of the truth and sufficiency of Divine revelation, while the numerous and admiring crowd, having pressed near the consecrated altar, listened in death-like stillness, until the tears and groans of the penitent, and the half suppressed shouts of joy which burst from the bosoms of the pious, told, in language not to be misunderstood, with what heavenly skill he had been enabled to wield the Spirit's sword."

The letter that follows, was sent by Bishop Soule to the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, from Lebanon. It shows their liability to sickness from a frequent change of climate. The date is April 8, 1829:

"Since my return from the Mississippi conference, my health has greatly declined, and weakness and pain are my constant attendants. I have attempted to preach but four times since the 1st of February, and each time have suffered much. I have great weakness and pain of the breast, with occasional discharge of blood from the lungs, accompanied with distressing cough. I have not been so much like a skeleton for many years. I attribute my afflictions, in a great measure, to a change of climate—coming from the south at an unfavorable season, and meeting an

unusually severe winter in the west. Since the winter has broken, and the weather become more mild, the unfavorable symptoms, which seriously admonished me of the dissolution of the 'earthly house of this tabernacle,' have considerably abated, so as to encourage the hope that I shall be able to take the field of labor in conformity with the arrangements which you may adopt for future operations. But I am under the apprehension, unpleasant as it is, that I shall be compelled to change the saddle for wheels. My loins have given way. My two last routes have been attended with great weakness, and much pain in the region of the kidneys, accompanied with the usual obstructions. Bandages, and plasters, and pills, have been my refuge for relief. But in the midst of all, I greatly rejoice to see and hear the prosperity of our Zion. Surely God is with us; and although men of corrupt minds, restless and ambitious, may, for a time, disturb the peace and harmony of the '*body of Christ*,' if we preserve the purity of the doctrine and discipline of 'our fathers,' the rashness and folly of these aspiring men will soon be exposed, and their schemes of innovation rendered abortive.

"From a notice in the last '*Itinerant*,' I am led to suppose that Bishop Hedding did not attend the Baltimore conference; and, consequently, that no definite arrangements were made there for our future plan of traveling. I trust he will be at Philadelphia, where you will be able to settle the plan for the three years to come. I wish it to be explicitly understood, as I think it was by Bishop Roberts and myself, at our last interview on the subject, that as my situation would not admit of my being present with you in council, I shall most cheerfully and willingly move in accordance with the plan you shall adopt, ready to take the work, to the utmost of my ability, at any time, or at any point on the continent. I should be glad to have the earliest information from you.

“I am, dear brethren, yours, with much affection and esteem.”

The following letter was, also, sent by Bishop Soule to the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, from the same place. It bears the date of October 17, 1829:

“The circumstances under which I am placed seem to require that I should be absent from the Kentucky conference. On my arrival at home, which was delayed for several days after I left Bishop Roberts, on account of the sickness of my horse, I found one of my daughters (Jane) dangerously sick with bilious fever, in its worst forms. A council of physicians had been called the day before my arrival, and the symptoms of the case were considered as alarming. I have been constant in watching for more than a week past, not having left her chamber but one night for that time, fully assured that all depended (under God) on the most careful and constant attention. By the blessing of Heaven, she appears now to be in a hopeful way of recovery; but, such is the delicacy of her state, that a relapse, which is not uncommon in similar cases, must almost inevitably prove fatal. I regret that I could not meet Bishop M’Kendree at Cincinnati, as he requested; but the circumstances which prevented it I could not control. I would think it advisable for the Bishop to get into quiet winter quarters as early as possible after the close of the Kentucky conference, before the rainy season commences and the roads become bad. Would it not be well for him to spend the winter, or, at least, the greater part of it, in Nashville, where the climate is favorable, and his friends would accommodate him with great pleasure?

“I think it will be entirely impracticable to meet the western conferences, in conformity to the last plan, with regard to time. Say, the Missouri and Illinois in September, and the Kentucky and Holston in October. Agreeably to this plan, I have appointed the Missouri and Illinois in

September; but the latter on the last day, giving only sufficient time between them; and yet I find it will be impossible for me to get to the Missouri from the Ohio conference. It is, indeed, desirable to keep the whole work as much in a circuit as practicable. But it would, I apprehend, be much safer, in regard to the certainty of attendance, to give sufficient time to move from one conference to another, within each division, and let the conferences in one division begin before they close in another. In this view, I should think it would be best to appoint the Kentucky conference so as to give sufficient time to travel from the Illinois, although it should necessarily push the time of the Holston beyond the limits of the plan. And as the Tennessee is the commencement of another division, it may be appointed without any particular regard to the time of the Holston, as may be found most convenient.

“Yours, with much affection and esteem.”

The annexed letter was received by Bishop Roberts from Rev. C. Holliday, then agent of the Book Concern at Cincinnati. It is dated August 22, 1829:

“Before I commenced preparing the accounts of the Missouri conference, it was my intention to be in my place at Urbana; but, as I proceeded in those accounts, I began to doubt: and, after I had gone through the accounts of both conferences, and compared difficulties, I concluded it would be best for me to go to the Missouri.

“I have had a year of the greatest labor I ever had, and my trials and difficulties have been new to me; but hitherto the Lord has helped me. I have sometimes doubted whether I should be able to sustain the labor; but, blessed be the Lord, he has renewed my strength from time to time. My mind has, in general, been kept in peace, except when employed in business. I am as retired here as I could be in the silent grove.

“I think I feel myself as much as ever devoted to the

Lord, and the work of the Lord. I have borne about me continual regret, for near twenty years, that I hesitated so long before I entered on the work of the ministry, and that I am still so unprofitable in it.

“I have, however, seen much of the goodness of the Lord. I cannot write without sensibly feeling the kindlings of devout and Christian affections. The fathers have borne with my weakness and foolishness. The brothers have uniformly opened my way, and been ready to hold me up and aid me in the great work. The sons in the ministry have, indeed, treated me with more than due respect. They are a lovely company; and I congratulate you and your honored colleagues on the blessed prospect that presents itself to you, that they and their successors will perpetuate the blessed work in which you have been so successfully employed, to the latest posterity. The people, with open hearts, as well as open doors, and sometimes with tears of Christian affection, have received me as an angel of God; and now, what shall I render unto the Lord for all his gracious benefits? I can only take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.

“This is the state of my mind, and I heartily pray that you and your honored colleagues and helpers may long live and see the good work—the work of God—prospering in your unwearied hands more and more abundantly. I remain, with true respects to you and Bishop M’Kendree, (if he is at the conference,)

“Yours, and his, in the Lord.”

The subjoined letter was sent by Bishop M’Kendree, while at his brother’s, to Bishop Roberts. It has the date of November 11, 1829.

“Circumstances prevent me from proceeding further at present; nor can I determine on any plan for future operations. I intend, if the Lord will, to visit the Churches next summer as extensively as I can, probably the west. In

such an event, I should be glad of a traveling companion. Upon the whole, I prefer brother Crist, for this purpose. I have spoken to him on the subject, and it meets his approbation. As far as I can learn, his return to the circuit will be acceptable and profitable. An appointment, therefore, to this, or on any other circuit, where he could conveniently visit me here or about Nashville, with an understanding to accompany me next summer, if I am able to travel, if not, for him to continue in the work, would be an accommodation both to him and to me.

“Yours in the bonds of the Gospel.”

The Rev. Jesse Walker was one of the leading pioneers of the west. The letter given below, written at Chicago, Illinois, dated November 25, 1830, and addressed to Bishop Roberts, will show what manner of persons those were who planted Methodism in the great valley.

“After my best respects to you, I will give an account of my labors since conference. I reached Chicago sufficiently soon to meet the Indians at the time of the payment; but the agent was on his death-bed, and he died a few days after; so that no council could be held, or any thing, in short, be done with them. At length, after five days starving and drinking, they gave them their money, and all broke up in confusion. One of the chiefs said, that all must be laid over till the next year. I then went to see the Kickapoos and those of the Pottawatomies that had commenced to serve the Lord. I had to follow them down the Grand prairie. Some I found on the Ambroise, some on the Little Wabash, and some on the Fox. This has taken me four weeks, in which I have been but a few nights in a house. The rains have been frequent; but the Lord has blessed me with health. I have returned to this place well, for which I am thankful. The Indians express a strong desire to settle themselves, and change their mode of living. There are three hundred of them who attend the worship

of God morning and evening, and keep holy the Sabbath day. I can only say, that there can be no doubt but if they could get some place, they would gladly settle themselves, and learn to read the word of God, and till the earth. Such a place is promised them by the Pottawatomies. It is on the Kankakee, and they are going to settle there in the spring.

“A blessed field is open at this time for sending the Gospel to the northwest. God is raising up preachers of the right kind, from this glorious work. Nearly two hundred Pottawatomies have already joined them. These people have laid aside ardent spirits altogether: also stealing, lying, cheating, quarreling, fighting, and all manner of sin. They keep the Sabbath day with all possible strictness, and speak feelingly of the divine influence of the Holy Spirit, and they exhort each other to give their hearts to the Savior. I still have some hope that Chicago will some day receive the Gospel. I pray for the blessed time to roll on.

“Please to send me some instructions. My soul longs to see something done for these poor Indians. I heard you were sick in St. Louis, from which I hope you have recovered. I heard brother Armstrong was sick, also; but I have learned he has gone home.

“I close, subscribing myself yours in the bonds of the Gospel of our blessed master, Jesus Christ.”

The annexed letter from Mrs. Hedding to Bishop Roberts, is one that exhibits deep piety. It was written at Lynn, and is dated August 3, 1832.

“Since I saw you, my health has been every day improving. I received a letter from Mr. Hedding, dated July 12th. He had not then decided about going to Upper Canada. He will write again soon. He is surrounded by the mortal pestilence, and, which ever way he turns, must face it; yet I believe God will preserve him.

“As for myself, I have had more anxiety to know that

my soul was fitted for heaven, than usual ; for I know this mortal body must, ere long, return to its mother earth. The Church fast was a blessing to me. The Lord is my portion. I am happy when in the Sabbath school. Blessed be the name of the Lord. May our good God prosper you on your way. Give my love to Mrs. Roberts, of whom I often think. Pray for me."

Our readers will be pleased to peruse the views of Bishop M'Kendree, on the subject of trying members according to Scripture and Methodist Discipline. The paper accompanying the following letter was sent by him to the other Bishops, with the hope of getting their recommendation, and then the sanction of the conference, as a uniform mode of procedure in Church trials. Whether all the other Bishops agreed to the plan, we are not informed ; or whether, in the multitude of other business, it was finally overlooked, we are not prepared to say. At any rate, we are persuaded that the document will be read with great profit by all who have any thing to do in executing the Discipline of the Church. The letter was written at Pulaski, and addressed to Bishop Roberts. It is dated November 13, 1833.

" I fully expected to see you at this place, but instead of this, I understood from brother Stringfield's letter that you were very sick in Kingsport. Over such circumstances we have no control, and should submit cheerfully. My state of health rendered it impracticable for me to bear the weight of business ; but, by selecting assistance, I have been able to superintend ; and from present appearances I hope the business will be done so as to give no cause of offense.

" Such is the administration of discipline in this conference, that I thought something should be done in order to bring about a more uniform and effective administration. I therefore drew up the accompanying view of the trial of a preacher and member, as a specimen of my thoughts on the principles of our Discipline, with the intention of submitting

it to you, and if we agree, to send it with our signatures for the concurrence of the other Bishops; and if they, or a majority of them, agree, then to present it to the conference, as our opinion of the construction and application of that rule. Such a measure may not be necessary in other parts, but I think it is here. I have sent a similar statement to Bishops Soule, Emory and Andrew; and if you see proper, after exchanging thoughts, you can communicate it to the conference. If not, it will remain where it is.

“Yours in the bonds of a yoke-fellow.”

The following is the document referred to in the preceding letter. It is addressed to “the preachers and brethren whose duty it may be to execute the Discipline of our Church.”

“DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD,—It is admitted to be the glory of Methodism, that it is virtually the *same* in every part of the world. Our doctrines are the same, both in Europe and America. Our discipline is the *same* throughout the United States; and the execution of discipline, or the administration of the government of the Church, *ought* to be the *same*, throughout the societies. In this respect, however, we have found considerable difference of sentiment and practice, owing, it is presumed, to the different circumstances and situation of things in different sections of our widely extended field of labor. It is, therefore, thought proper that a short explanatory view of our rules, for conducting the trials of preachers and members in the Church, should be presented to you, for the all-important purpose of preserving and maintaining, if possible, a uniform practice among us, in every respect, conformable to our excellent system of discipline.

“As the grand object of the Gospel is to save men, consequently, the design of Gospel discipline is to correct, reform, and fit them for happiness, and not to destroy, and render them subjects of misery. In the execution of discipline,

punishment or expulsion is the last operation consequent upon man's continuance in crime and unbelief, and this is a painful work to the administrator. When our Lord pronounced sentence against the Jewish nation, he wept. See Luke xix, 41-44. St. Paul suffered much persecution from the backslidden Corinthians; but he persevered in the exercise of Gospel discipline, by applying the doctrines of justice to convict, and mercy to encourage a return to reformation, until he succeeded, and triumphed in their salvation. See 1st and 2d epistles to the Corinthians.

“In conformity to this view of Gospel discipline, our rules and regulations are carried into operation, with the explicit understanding that crimes are divided into two classes.

“The first comprehends all such as are expressly forbidden in the word of God.’ (See Discipline, page 68.) To this class *only* is the act of punishment, or expulsion, extended, in the first instance of the exercise of discipline. } “The second class of crimes comprehends neglect of duties, &c. (See book of Discipline, page 70.) In all such cases, the first step in the exercise of discipline is private reproof, given by some one having the charge over the supposed offender; and if there be an acknowledgment, &c., the person is to be borne with. On a second offense, that is, on the crime being repeated, one or two faithful friends are to be taken; and if the person be not then cured, the case is to be brought before the Church, as the Discipline directs; and if there be no sign of real humiliation, he must be cut off.

“And when a person is clearly convicted of such a crime, or crimes, nothing short of expulsion will satisfy the rule, unless there be such a manifestation of genuine repentance and humiliation as will fully justify the restoration of the offending person: in such case, the connection between crime and its punishment is dissolved. Such cases may

possibly occur; and when they do, much care and prudence are necessary to guard the Church from reproach and injury, and, at the same time, save the offender. In all cases of the second class of crime, the first and second step ought to be taken previously to bringing the offender before the Church, and the continual intention should be to 'save a soul from death,' and the Church from reproach and influence of bad example consequent on holding persons guilty of crime in fellowship, James v, 20; and Jude xx, 25.

"The Discipline, when rightly understood, in connection with our episcopal government, very clearly points out the mode of trial to be pursued in regard to the different grades in the ministry, and, also, the private members; and there are some important principles closely connected with the administration of discipline, which should never be forgotten.

"A *Bishop* or *Superintendent*, having the general oversight of the temporal and spiritual concerns of the Church, is, of course, authorized to attend to any and all matters, small and great, in the execution of discipline.

"A *presiding elder*, who is in fact the agent of the Bishops, in virtue of his appointment, is authorized to exercise episcopal authority within the limits of his district, (except ordination;) consequently, it is his business, when present, fully to attend to every part of the exercise of discipline.

"The *assistant preacher* is, indeed, the presiding elder's aid, and has the more particular oversight and care of the circuit or station, to which he is appointed. (See his duties, as contained in the Discipline, page 39.)

"The *helper* is one placed on the circuit, or station, with the assistant, and is under his direction, in any thing he may do in the execution of discipline.

"The *class-leader* is restricted to his own class, and, if active and zealous, may do much for God and souls, in keeping up order and discipline therein.

“It should never be forgotten, that the privileges of our ministers and preachers, of trial by a committee, and of an appeal, and the privileges of our members of trial before the society, or by a committee, and of an appeal, are sacredly guarantied to them by the constitution of our Church. The great object of committees is to attend to complaints, or charges, in the intervals of conferences, and thereby rescue the character of innocent brethren, wrongfully accused, from reproach and injury, or by suspending them until the ensuing conference. The suspending power is clearly restricted to such crimes as are expressly forbidden in the word of God, and to such as are persisted in after Gospel reproof and admonition have been given. And it may be further remarked, that neither the organization of a committee, nor any of its acts, can abridge the powers of a conference, when they afterward come to act on the same case. And should a case occur at, or during the sitting of conference; or, although known of, be neglected; or, if it should be of such a recent date, as not to afford time to call a committee; and should then be brought before the conference, there is nothing in Discipline or reason to prevent the conference from hearing and deciding thereon, without the intervention of a committee, and especially if the person accused desire it. But, as the conference has the entire control of all cases, in which its own members are concerned, subject to the order of Discipline, they may, or they may not, appoint a committee, as they may judge proper; but they cannot, in any case, transfer their authority as a conference. The committee can only acquit if not guilty, or suspend if guilty; and if suspended, the conference must finally determine the case. The accused ought always to have timely notice to prepare for trial; and while on one hand the administrator of Discipline does not rule him to trial unprepared, so, on the other hand, he ought not to put off, or lay over the trial of a case, without good rea-

sons. The assistant preacher, in a circuit or station, is invested with full power to oversee all the concerns of the Church, as far as his jurisdiction extends, in attending to the complaints and wants of each member, without partiality; and very strictly, but mildly, enforce every point of the Discipline, as occasion may require.

“If he obtains a knowledge of any misconduct, or violation of Discipline by any of his members or preachers, it is his duty, as soon as possible, to attend to the case, and have it settled, without waiting for a formal charge to be handed to him: he himself must act in behalf of the Church, Ezekiel iii, 17; and xxxiii, 7; 1 Cor. v, 15; Rev. ii, 1, 2; and Rev. ii, 12-15, 18-20; Heb. xv, 7-17. No person ought to be permitted to *come forward* in the character of a *prosecutor*. Such a character is not known of in all our economy. The *accuser* is to be brought face to face with the accused. If this cannot be done, let the *next best evidence* be procured: consequently, the accuser is the very best evidence in the case. An aggrieved person may be a *complainant*; but our Discipline does not recognize any one as an accuser, unless he be a witness in the case against the accused. Any and all testimony offered on the trial of a case ought to be read or heard; but if any be of doubtful character, the Church is at liberty to give it as much weight as they think it deserves. We have no rule making it illegal to admit what is called *exparte* evidence.

“No accused preacher or member ought to be suspended or expelled, unless found guilty by a majority of those by whom he is tried. On taking a vote, the question ought always to be put in the positive. If any accused person has any well grounded objection to any one called to sit on his trial as a committee man, a prudent and judicious administrator would leave out the person objected to, and, if necessary, supply the place with another. But the right of *challenge*, so called, is not recognized in our Discipline.

“We do not think it advisable, or consistent with propriety or the nature of things, that a person should vote on the same case, in the condemnation of a person, both in the society or select number, or on committee and in conference, or in more than one conference, where appeals are taken. We think it prudent, and a mark of sound judgment, to pay due respect to the *opinions and advice* of the *aged* who have had experience, because from such, it is expected, that a knowledge of *primitive usage and custom* may be obtained. And in every point there ought to be frequent recurrence to *first principles*: these are generally best expressed in the original words which contain them. Observe well the *old landmarks*: inquire after the *old paths*; and rally around the *old standards of our fathers*.”

In the winter of 1834, Bishop Roberts had a severe attack of sickness, which brought him to the verge of the grave. The annexed letter, written by Mr. Samuel Dickinson, of Louisville, together with the one that follows it, furnished by Rev. Edward Stevenson, will present some of the incidents of this critical period, in as full and clear a manner as can at this time be done.

“When Bishop Roberts was sick in the city of Louisville, about ten years ago, I was frequently with him, both by night and by day. He suffered intensely and long, and was at length given up by his physicians, as beyond recovery. Under all his affliction, he manifested a cheerful and firm reliance upon the Savior; and with an unshaken confidence and humble trust in his atoning merits, cast himself entirely upon him. It might truly be said, that ‘whether living or dying, he was the Lord’s.’

“In his greatest extremity, when his disease had baffled the skill of his physicians, I was sent for to visit him. I obeyed the summons promptly. On going to his bed-side, I found him calm and composed, though suffering a great deal. There sat the partner of his joys and sorrows, and

several friends. ‘Brother Dickinson,’ said he, ‘I have sent for you to write my will. My physicians tell me they can do no more for me, and I have only time now to dispose of my worldly property, which is but little.’ Although I had known Bishop Roberts for many years, and had been with him often during his confinement, I never saw him so much disabled. His will, as completed, I could have written in fifteen minutes under ordinary circumstances; but on that occasion, I was at least two hours in performing it. When it was done, I read the whole to him, in a distinct, audible voice. He observed, ‘That is right.’ Brother C. Daniels, at whose house he was staying, was called up, and the Bishop remarked to us, ‘Brethren, this is my last will and testament.’ We subscribed our names as attesting witnesses to this, his last act, as we all believed. But He who controls all things in mercy decreed otherwise; for from that moment he began to improve. He drew the covering of the bed over his face, after saying, ‘this is my last will and testament,’ as if to say to us, ‘Farewell, brethren,’ and to hold communion with his God. In a few weeks, he was so far restored to health as to be able to return home. Thus, in the providence of God, one of his devoted servants was permitted to live nine years longer in the Church below, and aid his colleagues in the superintendency, and brethren in the ministry, in promoting the cause of truth and righteousness.”

The following is Mr. Stevenson’s letter, just referred to. It was written at Russelville, and is dated June 22, 1843.

“By a line just received from brother Holman, I am requested to furnish you with a document which contains what were supposed to be the last words of Bishop Roberts, when in the city of Louisville, Kentucky, during the winter of 1834, at which time he was believed to be at the point of death. I regret to say, that I left the paper containing the matter in question, when I came to this part of

the state, in the city of Lexington, and, therefore, cannot furnish it at this time.

“As I have my pen in hand I will, however, furnish you with a few facts in relation to the Bishop on that occasion. His attack was a very malignant type of congestive fever. Being on his return home from an extensive southern tour, he had traveled several days with the symptoms of the disease upon him; but on reaching Louisville was unable to proceed further. He was confined to his bed for several weeks, with but little prospect, from the first, of his recovery. At length, his condition became so doubtful to his physicians and all, that it was deemed advisable to inform him that there was, in the judgment of his medical attendants, but little hope of his recovery. He had evinced the utmost resignation and lamb-like patience throughout the whole period of his affliction; although he had said but little, *very little indeed*, in relation to his situation at any time. I was standing by his pillow, when Dr. Merriweather, with great candor and tenderness, informed him that it was the opinion of himself and the gentlemen who were associated with him, that his case was considered doubtful—that, in fact, they had but little hope of his recovery. Never did I witness, on such an occasion, a greater degree of calmness, self-possession, and perfect resignation. At his suggestion, arrangements were made for sending for his companion, which, up to this time, he had opposed; but now he appeared exceedingly anxious to see her before his departure. A will was then written under his immediate direction. In all of which, I then thought, and I still think, that I never saw any man engaged in any matter of importance with less agitation of spirit: nothing was hurried, neglected, or forgotten: he was calm, discriminating, and self-possessed to the astonishment of all present. He seemed like one preparing for a pleasing and delightful journey.

“His temporal matters arranged, he desired me to procure

pen, ink and paper, and take my position near his bed-side, adding, that he presumed I could write as fast as he would be able to talk. With the exception of brother and sister Daniels, at whose residence he had put up, all were kindly requested to leave the room. He then commenced: gave a brief history of his life, including his conversion, call to the ministry, itinerant career, &c., closing with the exercises of his mind during his afflictions, and especially at this time. But I dare not trust my memory so far as to give the details. I may, however, say with confidence, that he desired his colleagues, his brethren generally, and the Church at large, to know, that 'in death he was supported by the faith that he had endeavored to preach while living,' adding, in conclusion, (and I shall never forget the mild, though fervid sincerity and correctness with which he spoke,) '*I hope that the place which I am about to vacate, will be filled by a wiser, better and more useful man than I have ever been.*' These are the last words in the document: my recollection of them is distinct."

The meeting of the Bishops previous to General conference, is always considered of importance, that they may have time to unite in presenting to the conference in an address, such matters as they deem useful for the welfare of the Church. On this topic Bishop Soule addressed the following letter to Bishop Roberts. It is dated March 21, 1836.

"I have received a letter from Bishop Hedding, in answer to one I had written him, proposing a meeting of the Bishops at Cincinnati, on the 26th day of April, for the purpose of deliberation on the important matter to come before the General conference, and to unite in such a communication as may be thought proper to lay before that body.

"The Bishop is entirely in favor of the meeting on the day proposed, and assures me of his attendance, if no adverse providence prevents.

“He farther informs me, that he has written to Bishop Andrew, proposing the meeting and desiring his attendance, of which he has no doubt.

“I trust you will not think me assuming in proposing such a meeting, and I doubt not but you will cordially agree with us in our view of the importance of its object.

“Although I proposed the meeting, it is doubtful whether I shall be able to attend on the day appointed, 26th of April.

“I have in my possession all the manuscript papers of our late venerable senior Bishop. The item of his will by which I hold them is in the following words, viz: ‘I give and bequeath to Joshua Soule, all my manuscripts and papers, to be disposed of as he, with the assistance of Thomas L. Douglass, may deem most expedient.’

“By this bequest, it becomes necessary that brother Douglass should assist me in the examination of these papers, and with his advice, in reference to the disposal to be made of them.

“Brother Douglass has appointed to be at my house a week before the General conference, for the above purpose.

“And as there is a very large collection of papers, and many of them are very important, it will require much time and care to give them such an examination as the occasion requires. This may prevent my meeting with my colleagues at Cincinnati. I shall, however, do all in my power to attend as early as possible.

“It will, I think, be well to get to the city on the evening of the 25th, that there may be sufficient time for the important business preparatory to the opening of the conference.”

At the General conference of 1836, there were some who deliberated on dividing the whole United States into episcopal districts, and allotting to each Bishop his field of labor for the four ensuing years. In the annexed extract of a letter written by Bishop Roberts to his wife, it will be seen with what composure he viewed the whole proceeding, and

that he seemed ready to leave his retreat from public noise in Indiana, and move at once to the east, without a murmur. The letter is dated May 7th, 1836:

“You desired me to write you a line on my arrival at this place. But various things have been pressing on me, and prevented me till this evening. And now I scarcely have time to spare, having to preach in the morning. We have spent one week in conference. The delegates are generally here—more than one hundred and fifty in number. We talk of making two or three additional Bishops; but who will be selected is not yet known. There is some talk of districting the work, and sending me to the east. Should this be the case, you will have to leave your country residence and go with me; but I need not trouble you before the time.

“I do not know when I shall be home; but you will all do as well as you can in my absence. My health is good, and I am lodging in the same room with Bishop Hedding, at O. M. Spencer’s, my old friend and brother. It is late in the evening, and I want to rest; therefore I must bring my letter to a close.”

CHAPTER XII.

HIS CLOSING LABORS.

ALTHOUGH the health of Bishop Roberts, for a man of his age, was generally good, yet time had made its inroads on his vigorous frame. Indeed, after his severe attack in Louisville, in the winter of 1834, he never recovered his former state of health. The General conference, therefore, kindly passed the following resolution, in reference to his future labors:

“Whereas, Bishop Roberts has assured this conference,

and we are fully convinced that his want of health, and the infirm state of his constitution, will not justify an attempt in him to do effective service in the episcopacy, therefore,

“*Resolved*, That he be at full liberty to pursue such a course as he may think best, during the ensuing four years, for the improvement of his health, and to prolong his useful life, affording, in the meantime, all the service he can, as a joint Superintendent, or Bishop, in our Church.”

The following is extracted from an outline of the plan on which the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church determined to visit the annual conferences, and the work within their bounds, together with the missions, during the period between May, 1836, and May, 1840. The extract we give embraces Bishop Roberts' appointments:

“1836—Missouri, September 14; Illinois, October 5; Indiana, October 26. 1837—Pittsburg, July 19; Erie, August 9; Michigan, September 6; Ohio, September 27; Kentucky, October 18. 1838-9—Tennessee, October 3; Arkansas, October 31; Mississippi, December 5; Alabama, January 2. 1839-40—Holston, October 16; Georgia, December 10; South Carolina, January 8; North Carolina, January 29; Virginia, February 19; Baltimore, March 11.”

The following remarks accompanied the outline of the plan: “It is, also, understood, that, in case either of the Bishops be prevented by illness, or any extraordinary dispensation of Providence, from pursuing his regular course of visitations, notice will be given, if the time permit, to the next adjacent Bishop who may then be disengaged, who will, thereupon, supply the vacancy; and, also, that during the intervals between the annual conferences, the Bishops will visit and superintend such parts of the work generally, including the missions, as their situation and circumstances will allow. They may, also, occasionally, Providence permitting, meet each other at conferences, when the times and places of the holding of them may admit of their so doing.”

When at home he worked in the field, as far as his strength would permit. He was not able, however, to do what he had done in former years. Yet it was not easy for him to learn that he was now incapable of performing the full work of a young and vigorous man, even in the harvest field. He found it difficult to obtain active persons to reap his wheat. After being baffled in securing such persons, and finding those whom he had employed were very inefficient, he actually undertook to reap himself, as he always had done in former years, when at home in harvest time. But his former vigor was gone, and he could not endure the fatigue as he had done. He employed himself in the clearing, and every other kind of work done on his farm, sometimes rolling logs, attending the log heaps, &c. He labored with great diligence in erecting a saw-mill on his land; was clothed as usual in home-made garments; and aided in constructing the dam as well as the building.

The Bishops have found it necessary, in order to preserve a uniform and consistent administration, to meet and consult on their duties, obligations, and responsibilities. In consequence of the vast field of their labors, the fewness of their number, and the age and infirmities of some of them, it was found difficult so to arrange their affairs as to meet for such consultations.

It was, however, finally agreed, after considerable epistolary correspondence, that a meeting should take place at New York, on the 24th of May, 1838, at which time and place Bishops Soule, Hedding, Andrew, Morris, and Waugh, were present, while Bishop Roberts was absent. The cause of his absence was, his age and infirmities, together with his extensive travels to the conferences which he had agreed to attend. Bishop Waugh was chosen secretary. The session lasted several days, and on the 15th of June, he transcribed the minutes and sent an attested copy to Bishop Roberts. There is nothing of either a

lordly or arrogant spirit, or arbitrary regulation, found in the proceedings. The aim is to proceed *according to the Discipline of the Church* in all respects, and in no case otherwise.

A kind, yet unknown friend, made Bishop Roberts a life member of the American Bible Society, by the payment of thirty dollars. The perusal of the letter accompanying the gift, will be a lesson of example, showing that others may do likewise. It was addressed to the general agent of the society, and is dated August 2d, 1838.

“I send you the sum of thirty dollars, which I will thank you to present to the managers of the American Bible Society, to be devoted to the circulation of the holy Scriptures.

“In consequence of this contribution, you will please to enrol the name of Robert R. Roberts, Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, among your life members.

“The above is from a fund which has arisen from the continued savings of ‘a missionary,’ by his laying aside portions of fees and presents at the time they were received, the entire amount of fees received on Sunday and Thursday in every week, also free-will offerings under peculiar providences, one-tenth of his regular salary, and one-tenth of the balance of his receipts during the year over his family expenses.

“You will please forward to brother Roberts a certificate of his life membership: also beg him to lay aside portions of fees, of presents, of regular salary, and of the balance in favor of a kind providence, at the end of the year. Thus will he ever have a fund for the Lord. Urge him to constitute in like manner, at least one of his friends a life member of your important society; and in so doing, I would beg him to request that friend, thus constituted, to constitute some other individual a life member. In this way, passing the excitement round from friend to friend, an amount of good will accumulate which the full glories of the eternal world alone can unfold.”

The place of his residence was never satisfactory to his ecclesiastical friends, in consequence of its remote and retired location, as few could have the privilege of seeing him when he was at home. His brethren of the Indiana conference were very desirous that he should change his place of residence for one more accessible and central. New Albany, Greencastle, Madison, and other places were proposed. The brethren at Louisville, too, were very importunate that he should reside among them. The subject of his removing was brought before the Indiana conference, and was acted upon. We make the following extract from the journal of this conference, of October 30, 1839.

“A preamble and resolutions were offered by C. W. Ruter and Allen Wiley, by which Bishop R. R. Roberts, in consequence of his increasing infirmities, was requested to remove to some prominent point in this state, which might best suit his feelings, where his brethren and friends can have more ready access to him, and thus render him such attention as the Church feel anxious he should receive. By a rising vote the conference unanimously resolved to make the request.”

Notwithstanding the importunities of the Indiana conference, and of several individual members of that body, whom the Bishop held in the highest estimation, he nevertheless declined to remove from his isolated retreat. At his age, he was unwilling to change, so as to form new neighborhood alliances.

In the year 1841, he attended the Pittsburg, Erie, Michigan, North Ohio, Ohio, and Indiana conferences. His labors were excessive in all these conferences, in consequence of their size, the various topics introduced, and his having no other Superintendent with him. The Pittsburg conference had ten days of constant sittings, except Sabbath. There was a session on the last night, (Friday,) which lasted till ten o'clock. The greater part of the rest of the night

was spent in making out the missionary drafts, the minutes, and other matters, which had to be attended to. On Saturday morning, at nine o'clock, he took the stage for Shenango, in company with the writer. We passed through the neighborhood of where he and his associates made their first camp, where they deposited their provisions when they went in search of land, and where they finally made their locations, and we then arrived at Mr. Lindsay's, husband of his favorite sister, Elizabeth. In this neighborhood he remained till Tuesday following, and then set out for the Erie conference, to Warren, Ohio, which met next day.

At the Pittsburg conference he received a letter from the Rev. Thornton Fleming, who first licensed him to preach, carried on his recommendation to the Baltimore conference, and was his presiding elder after his admission. Between them there existed a warm and sincere friendship. The letter abounds with the kindest feelings toward the Bishop.

When at home, he always worked as much as his health and strength would allow. In planting time in 1842, he dropped corn, as was his practice; and was considered a full hand. He could endure great exercise, however, but a short time. In January, 1843, after returning from Bedford, he worked west of his house in the village of Lawrenceport, aiding in clearing land for the reception of corn in the spring. He burned the brush, and assisted in clearing away the logs. This land was not his own; but he had rented it, or obtained the privilege of cultivating it from the owner. His industrious habits were continued as long as he had any strength to exercise.

The following kind letter was received by him from Bishop Morris, just after the latter had been deprived of his excellent wife by death. It is dated June 28, 1842.

"I expect to leave in a day or two, on my regular tour of conference appointments; and I, therefore, embrace this

opportunity of calling your attention to a few things connected with our common work. Having learned last year, by observation, the wants of some conferences in your bounds this year, and knowing the crowded state of some of the conferences which fall to me now, I feel disposed, with your concurrence, to make an effort to send off some preachers to Rock River, Missouri, Arkansas and Texas conferences, such as can be spared, and are suitable for the work there, and may be willing to go. Any suggestions which you may please to communicate to me on this subject, at any time, will be thankfully received and cheerfully attended to.

“The change in my family, has been a sore trial, and still affects me at times severely. I feel that I have lost my best earthly friend, and that to be deprived of her sympathy, example, counsel and prayers, is a serious matter. Still I do not sorrow as they who have no hope; and I trust that when I resume my wonted labor, I shall feel relieved.

“It was with regret I learned sometime since that you were in poor health. I trust that rest for a few weeks at home will, by the Divine blessing, bring you relief. Please remember me kindly to sister Roberts, and pray for me.

“Yours, with much esteem and affection.”

Early in the spring of 1842, Bishop Roberts set out to visit the Indian missions, west of Arkansas and Missouri, and performed a journey which most men in the vigor of life would be unwilling to undertake. He also purposed to visit the missions on the Upper Mississippi; but this he was compelled to abandon. A sketch of his journey will serve, at least, to show that the office of Bishop in the Methodist Episcopal Church is no sinecure. For so far as labor, privation and responsibility are concerned, what is true of one Bishop is true of all. And if in any thing they have the pre-eminence, it is in this, that in labors they are more abundant. We give the account of this journey from the pen of the Rev. E. R. Ames, missionary secretary, who has

kindly furnished us with the narrative, for which he has our warmest thanks.

“January 21st, 1842. I will commence my notice of the Bishop’s labors at this point of time, as on this day he left home for the purpose of attending to some official duties which required his presence at Louisville. By easy stages, he reached New Albany, where he spent a day in visiting some of his old friends, and advising with the preachers on the subject of organizing a new charge in the upper part of the city. From January 29th to February 1st, the time was spent in Louisville and Jeffersonville, where he preached four times, and visited a number of the old members of the Church, with whom he had been acquainted for many years, and who were rejoiced again to see him. February 2d, he reached Madison, where he attended the quarterly meeting, and preached once. On Monday morning, at a Church meeting, a resolution was passed, requesting the Bishop to ‘organize a new charge in the city of Madison.’ In compliance with their request, the Bishop directed the preacher in charge to form such of the members as wished to belong to the new charge into classes, appoint them leaders, and write to Rev. W. M. Daily to come and take charge of them as their pastor. On the 8th, he reached Cincinnati, where he spent a day, and proceeded to Lebanon, to visit Bishop Soule, in order to consult and advise with him on various important subjects connected with the interests of the Church. On his return to Cincinnati, he spent the Sabbath in the neighborhood of Sharon, and preached twice.

“As, in the division of episcopal labor, it devolved on Bishop Roberts next fall to attend the conferences with which our heavy Indian missions are connected, he determined to proceed to the southwestern frontier, in order to visit the Indian tribes along our borders south of the Missouri River, and, if possible, to extend his journey to the

tribes on the Upper Mississippi, in order that, from a personal examination, he might be the better prepared to judge correctly of the estimates it would be necessary to make for the support of the missions, and, also, of the most suitable men to conduct them.

“Having reached Louisville on the 14th, the Bishop started, on the 15th, to visit his family, not having anticipated a longer absence when he left them. It was arranged that, on his return, he should proceed by steamboat down the Ohio and Mississippi to the mouth of the Arkansas, and up that river to Fort Smith, immediately above which lies the Indians’ territory. During his absence, a strong two-horse carriage was procured, and such other arrangements made as would, as far as possible, insure his comfortable travel by land, after reaching Fort Smith. On the 22d, he returned to New Albany, where he preached in the evening. On the afternoon of the 23d, he took passage on board the steamboat *American Eagle*, Captain Montgomery, for Montgomery’s Point, on the Mississippi, where he arrived on Saturday evening, the 26th, after a most pleasant passage. On Sabbath morning, he preached in the bar-room of the tavern, to about thirty hearers. And here, at this wicked place, in sickness, poverty and crime, he saw a man who had once been a member of the Baltimore conference, and a popular and useful minister, but now a confirmed drunkard. On the 28th, he took passage on the steamboat *Herschel*, Captain Birch; and on March 1st, arrived at Little Rock. The boat stopped a few hours, and the Bishop preached. On the 5th, he reached Fort Smith. Here the Bishop was kindly received and entertained by Joseph Bennett, Esq.; and on the following day, (Sabbath,) he preached twice. On the 17th, Mr. Bennett kindly furnishing him an Indian pony, he rode up the Arkansas about eighteen miles, to the Choctaw agency, in order to see Captain Armstrong, the superintendent of the western

territory, and United States' agent for the Choctaws. The agent was absent, being at Fort Gibson; and, as the Bishop did not wish to travel through the Indian country without first seeing him, he determined to await his return, which was on the 11th. The Bishop was anxious to cross the Choctaw country, over to Red River, that he might visit the missions among the Choctaws, which are all on that side of the nation; but, after conversing with the agent and with General Taylor, of the United States army, on the subject, he thought it hardly prudent to attempt it; as the country was rough and mountainous, and it would cost him a journey of near three hundred miles on horse-back. He, therefore, returned to Fort Smith; and a horse having been purchased, he started, on the morning of the 15th, in company with brother Adams, from the Fort Smith circuit, on a trip through the Cherokee country. The missionaries rejoiced to see, for the first time, a Bishop within the bounds of their work. Nor was it less grateful to the pious heart of the Bishop to meet with these faithful missionaries, and to behold the many hundreds of Christian converts, who, through their instrumentality, had been gathered into the fold of the great Shepherd. The Indians, also, were greatly delighted with the Bishop's visit. His patriarchal and venerable appearance, his kind and affectionate deportment toward them, his familiarity in visiting them, eating at their tables and lodging in their dwellings, completely won their confidence. One of them, at whose house he spent a night, said, 'It made my heart feel so warm to think a Bishop would come and stay with me.' Another, on first seeing him, inquired who he was, and was told that he was the grand-father of all the missionaries, 'Well,' said the Indian, scrutinizing the Bishop's furrowed countenance and gray hairs, 'he look like it.' After spending about two weeks in traveling through the nation, visiting the missions and preaching, he returned to

Fort Smith, in company with D. B. Cummins, the superintendent of the missions among the Cherokees.

“The next object was to accomplish the journey from Fort Smith to Fort Leavenworth, on the Missouri River, a distance of about three hundred and fifty miles. I was to have met the Bishop at Fort Smith; but in my journey through the Choctaw country to Red River and back, was delayed longer than I expected, by visiting the missions, and making some arrangements with the agent and the nation, relative to the establishment of a large manual labor school at Fort Coffee, which was to be under the direction of our missionary society. Consequently, I failed to arrive at the time appointed. I reached there, however, on April 1st. The Bishop and brother Cummins, finding their horses would work in the carriage, had started on the day before for a quarterly meeting, which was to be held on the Upper Cherokee mission, from whence they would proceed to brother Cummins’ residence, on the border of the Seneca nation, about ninety miles from Fort Smith, on the road to Fort Leavenworth. Here I joined them on the evening of April 5; and found that, notwithstanding the exceeding roughness of the roads, they had met with no accident on their journey, except breaking the tongue of the carriage, which was easily repaired.

“Having exchanged the wild horse which I had been riding for one that would work in harness, and sister Cummins having kindly furnished a boiled ham, some biscuit, &c., the Bishop started, on the 8th of April, for the Shawnee mission. The weather was mild and pleasant, and nature was robed in the beautiful livery of spring. As the road, for twenty miles, passed through the Seneca and Shawnee nations, some evidences of improvement were noticed; such as comfortable cabins, cattle, hogs, ponies, and cultivated fields; but these Indians are by no means in a prosperous condition, compared with many of the western

tribes. Several beautiful streams were crossed during the day, on the banks of one of which a halt was made about noon, to eat a lunch and feed the horses. The road we this day traveled was pleasant, with the exception of occasionally a very stony place. In the evening, having made about thirty miles, the Bishop stopped at Mr. Ezra Wilson's, where he was kindly received, and spent the night pleasantly.

“April 9. Started again, and after riding about half a mile, crossed Shoal Creek, a stream about forty yards wide, with a rapid current, the water as clear as crystal; rode a short distance out of the way to see the cataract, where the water falls between fourteen and fifteen feet over a perpendicular ledge of rock, which extends entirely across the bed of the stream. In the afternoon, reached the residence of Judge Bright, on the bank of Spring River. The time was spent pleasantly here, until Monday morning. The Bishop preached on the Sabbath.

“April 11. Rose by daylight, had breakfast, and were on the road early, as a journey of forty-five miles had to be performed, or no shelter could be had for the night. The first forty miles of the way were over a prairie, without a house, and, in the summer, without water; but there was no lack of water to-day; for about three o'clock, the rain began to fall in torrents; so that in one hour the prairie was perfectly deluged: every little drain became an angry torrent. The thunder broke, peal after peal, in one continuous and deafening roar; and we were almost blinded by the incessant flashes of vivid lightning. The wind, moreover, swept over the broad and naked plains, as if raging with fury, and in pursuit of something on which to spend its force. The poor horses seemed perfectly paralyzed with fear. It was impossible to urge them forward. All that could be done was to turn them before the storm, so that the wind and the rain might beat on the hind part of the carriage; and thus we patiently awaited the result

of the elemental war. Such was the violence of the wind, that for some time it seemed as though horses, carriage and all would be driven before it, and dashed to pieces. But He who said to the storm, eighteen hundred years ago, 'Peace, be still,' calmed the tempest now, and we were permitted to proceed on our way unharmed. In about two hours, we reached the timber, and the rain again commenced pouring down in torrents. In the midst of the storm, we arrived at the bank of a considerable stream, called the Dry Wood, which was any thing but dry wood then. It was rising rapidly, and appeared as if it would soon be swimming deep, if it was not so already. The banks were at least forty feet high, and steeper than the roof of a house. What was to be done? It was impossible to stay where we were, and it seemed equally so to go forward; but it was determined to make the effort. I handed the lines to the Bishop, took the near-horse by the bit, and led them to the bank of the stream. The horses planted their feet, and down we all slid together; but it was impossible to stop at the water's edge; and before we could call a halt, I was waist deep in water. But the stream was finally passed in safety; and after losing our way, and traveling three or four miles through the rain, another similar stream was crossed by a similar process; and shortly after, weary, wet and hungry, the place of destination was reached.

“ For the last three days, we had been traveling on the Old Harmony mission trace, but it bears too much to the east. On inquiry, it was ascertained that the military road, which passes from Fort Leavenworth to the southern military posts, was not more than ten or twelve miles west of us. Accordingly, in the morning, we struck off over the prairie in a due west course, as near as we could judge, and about ten o'clock reached the road of which we were in search. During the day, we crossed the Osage River, Sugar Creek, and several smaller streams, passed over some most beauti-

ful and fertile country, and at night reached the falls of the Marie des Cygnes. Here was an Indian trading-house, occupied by a Frenchman and two or three squaws. Several Osage Indians, some Pottawatomies, and two or three negroes were about. This was the place where we expected to pass the night. We drove up; the trader came out, and I asked him if we could stay all night? He seemed quite grim, and said he was not prepared to keep travelers. I assured him that we were not at all particular about our personal accommodation: if we but had a fire and shelter, we would be satisfied: our principal anxiety was to procure some grain for our wearied horses. He replied that he had no grain except what he bought, and that we could not stay. While this colloquy was going on, the Bishop sat in silence, on the hind-seat of the carriage; and as the curtains were down, and it was getting dark, the trader could not see him. All the French traders in the Indian country are Catholics; and it just then occurred to me that we were not more than eighteen or twenty miles from a Catholic mission among the Pottawatomies. So I thought I would try an experiment. And, turning round on my seat, I said, with great deference, but quite audibly, '*Bishop*, what is to be done?' 'Why, we must get some fire and camp out,' he replied. No sooner did the sound of the title fall on the Frenchman's ears, than an entire change was at once produced; and hearing the Bishop's reply to my question, he exclaimed, 'O, by no means, gentlemen: you shall be very welcome to stay.' And stay we did; and both ourselves and horses fared exceedingly well. And the Bishop's title, which I did not fail to use on all occasions, after I discovered its value, paid all expenses.

"April 14. The morning cold and frosty. We crossed the Marie des Cygnes at the falls, and proceeded over a fine, high, rolling prairie, till about nine o'clock, when we came to a small stream skirted with timber. Just above where

the road crossed, we noticed smoke ascending; and concluding that an Indian camp was there, the Bishop determined to stop and warm himself. On reaching the fire, we found a Delaware Indian and his wife. He had been making his winter's hunt on the waters of the Arkansas, and was returning to his tribe on the Missouri. He proved to be a Christian, a member of our Church. He had seen me at a camp meeting, which I attended among the Delawares the previous year, and recollected me as soon as I approached him. When I told him who the Bishop was, and that he was going up to his nation, he seemed very much pleased; but nothing near as much as the Bishop was, when he found that a small book which he had in his hand, and which he was reading when we approached his camp, was a portion of the New Testament that has been translated into the Delaware language. It was, indeed, both beautiful and interesting, to see this pious Indian, at his solitary camp in the wilderness, searching the Scriptures. And it is thus the traveler among the western tribes, wherever he goes, will find 'the good seed of the kingdom' has been scattered by the faithful missionaries. May God bless them, and those among whom they labor, and prosper the cause in which they are engaged.

"Proceeding on our journey, about noon we reached a grove of timber where there was a large spring. This is a great camping place for the troops, and most others who travel this road. We determined to stop, eat our noon lunch, and let the horses pick some grass. And as we were in a great hurry, and the horses were, moreover, *so gentle*, it was thought to be altogether unnecessary to take them from the carriage. The contents of our wallet were spread out on the grass, and the Bishop lifting up his hands, was in the act of asking a blessing on our food, when away went horses, carriage and all. In three minutes, they dashed, at the top of their speed, through the brush, down into a

hollow : there they upset the carriage, crushed the top all to pieces, broke the tongue, and one of the whipple-trees, and tore loose the other : then away they went over an eminence, where they were out of sight. The carriage was turned right side up, and after tracing the horses about two miles they were found, quietly feeding in a little valley, and were brought back. By this time, it was probably four o'clock. One of two things had to be done : we were either to mount the horses and ride to the mission, which was thirty or forty miles distant, and there get some one to come back with a team, and after taking the carriage apart, and putting it into a big wagon, bring it on to us, or by some means it was to be patched up so that we could travel in it. It was finally determined to try to repair the carriage, and camp there all night. Before leaving Louisville, I remembered that a carriage might be upset and broken in an Indian country where no mechanics could be met with, and I, therefore, prepared myself with some gimblets, nails, screws, a hand-axe, &c. They were accordingly used, and to such good advantage, that by eight o'clock next morning the carriage and harness were as strong, if not quite so neat, as they were before. The night, however, was not passed without considerable discomfort to the Bishop.

“April 5. After traveling hard all day, without even stopping to eat a mouthful of food, we reached the Indian Manual Labor School about dark. Thus did the old man, bending under the weight of more than threescore years, travel two days without food, except a small quantity of cold meat and bread, and pass the night without a tent, or even a blanket to cover him. Such are some of the privations which Methodist Bishops have to endure.

“The Bishop had promised himself great satisfaction from his visit to these missions ; but was much cast down by learning, on his arrival, that the Rev. William Johnson, the superintendent, had *died* the week before. He had

been laboring among the Indians for ten years, and was universally beloved and confided in by them. The arrival of the Bishop was most opportune, as it was requisite for him to appoint another superintendent, and make some other changes which the death of brother Johnson had rendered necessary. After spending a day or two in examining the condition of the school, the farm, stock, mechanics' shops, &c., and offering some suggestions as to the best mode of conducting the establishment, and making some slight alterations, he proceeded to visit the missions, and preached among the Shawnees, Delawares and Kickapoos. He enjoyed himself very much; and was greatly pleased with the condition of the missions; and also with what he saw on his visit to the Moravian mission among the Delawares, and the Friends' school among the Shawnees.

“Having disposed of the carriage and horses on the 4th of May, the Bishop took passage, at the Kansas landing, on the Missouri River, for St. Louis, on the steamboat Oceana, Captain Miller, and arrived at his destination on the 7th. He preached in the city twice, and assisted at the laying of the corner stone of the Centenary Church. He concluded to relinquish his intended trip to the missions on the Upper Mississippi; and on the 10th of May, started for home, by way of Louisville, where he arrived about the 20th. He remained at home until the last week in June.”

In the Indiana conference all the preachers regarded him as a venerable patriarch in the Church, to whom they owed the highest deference, respect and honor. They considered that such was his due, as a man, a Christian and a minister. To this was added, too, all the regard which they owed to a Bishop, especially the senior Bishop in the Church. He mingled with them as one of their own body, in all respects, taking part in all the benevolent operations of the conference, whether missionary, collegiate, or of any other description. The conference, and all its mem-

bers, responded in every feeling, act, and expression of love and honor, for their venerable father in the Gospel. They were very solicitous, as already stated, that he should reside at Albany, Madison, Greencastle, or some more central or accessible place than the one he was then living in. They were, also, very desirous of having his likeness in full size; and, accordingly, at their conference, in 1841, held in Terrehaute, on the 6th of October, they unanimously passed the following resolution:

“*Resolved*, That our venerable and beloved Superintendent, Bishop Roberts, be, and he is hereby requested, at his first convenient opportunity, to sit for his portrait, and that the preachers of this conference be permitted to defray the expense which may accrue in obtaining such portrait.”

The good Bishop was never forward to exhibit himself, and would, probably, have taken no step in having his portrait painted, had he not been reminded of the conference resolution at a future time. Accordingly, on May 20th, 1842, Rev. Messrs. Simpson and E. R. Ames, addressed a letter to him at his residence, in which, after quoting the resolution, they say:

“Our object in addressing you now is, to express our strong desire that you would comply, as soon as practicable, with this request of the conference; and as a portrait painter, who has executed some good likenesses in this place, will return here by the 1st of July, we would urgently request you to visit us and remain from the first to the middle of the month, that yours may then be taken.

“We suppose that this time will suit you, as you will then be on your way to Chicago; and we need scarcely remind you that your advanced age and arduous labors admonish us to secure, while we may, an accurate likeness of one who has been identified with so much that dearly concerns our Church, and who, to so many of this

conference in particular, has been a spiritual father and guide.

“Brother Beswick offers his services to bring you here in a carriage; and unless you should decline complying with our request, he will either go or send for you, so that you can be here by the time specified.

“If you come, as we hope you will, you need not trouble yourself to give us an answer, as all arrangements will be accordingly made; but if you should be unable to comply, we would much desire an immediate answer.”

In pursuance of this request, the Rev. Isaac Crawford, of the Indiana conference, proceeded to the Bishop's residence, with a horse and carriage, to convey him to Greencastle. They, accordingly, started for this place, in the last week of June, and arrived there early in July. The Bishop spent about two weeks with his friends at the University; and, during his stay, his portrait was taken at full size, which is said to be an excellent likeness, and is deposited among the archives of the University, of which he was a principal patron and benefactor. He enjoyed this visit very much, and was greatly pleased with the appearance, condition, management and prospects of the University. From its origin he had taken a great interest in the institution. Several years previous to this visit, he had made a donation to it of one hundred dollars; and his interest in it, and his ardent desire for its success, continued to the last. Even on his death bed, after providing for the comfortable support of his aged widow, paying his debts, and assisting some poor relatives, he made the University his *residuary legatee*. His portrait is placed in the large chapel of the college edifice, which casts its evening shadow on the quiet grave where the mortal remains of the Bishop now repose.

During his stay at Greencastle, while the portrait was being taken, President Simpson, as already stated, wrote

down, from his own mouth, a brief outline of his early life, Christian experience, and ministerial labors, to the year 1808. This outline comprises thirty-six pages, half foolscap, closely written, which the writer of these pages acknowledges to have been of great advantage to him in preparing the present account of the venerable Bishop. If the pressing literary labors of Dr. Simpson had permitted him to have written the life of Bishop Roberts, the author is persuaded the public would have had a more complete and interesting narrative than the one now furnished.

Having made an arrangement with brother Crawford to accompany him, and convey him in his carriage, he set out for Chicago from Greencastle, about the middle of July. On his way, he spent several days at Ashgrove, Iroquois county, Illinois, the present residence of his brother, Lewis Roberts. From this place he wrote a letter to his nephew, James Roberts, of which the following is an extract. The letter is dated July 21st, 1842:

“I spent ten or twelve days at Greencastle, preached several times with them, and had my likeness taken in full length; and some persons are of the opinion that it is a very good one. As for my part, I cannot tell. We took six or eight persons into the Church at the late quarterly meeting in this grove. We are to have a two days meeting, near Moore’s, on Sugar Creek, to commence on Saturday, 23d. After this meeting, I am to preach at Cunoan’s, on Wednesday evening, and spend the next Sabbath in Juliet, and on Monday ride to the seat of conference.”

He was in Chicago as early as August 2d, where he met brother Ames, on his return from the Upper Mississippi, after visiting the Indian missions in that distant region. On the 3d, the Rock River conference commenced its session, and the Bishop presided with his usual courtesy, dignity and propriety. He preached on Sabbath, and ordained a number of deacons and elders. On Monday

night of the conference, he was present at the missionary anniversary, a thing he rarely omitted when attending the conferences.

On Friday the 12th of August, he set out for Winehester, the seat of the Illinois conference, and arrived there on Thursday the 18th, one day after the conference commenced, considerably indisposed. This was a heavy conference, and the stationing of the preachers and the other duties devolving on him, were necessarily very oppressive. But he bore up under them, and seemed, if possible, more anxious than usual, to fulfill the entire duties of his office. But it was evident to all, that it required a great effort in him to accomplish his work.

Having finished the business of the Illinois conference, he proceeded in an open buggy to Jefferson City, Missouri, the seat of the Missouri conference, which commenced August 31st, and adjourned September 8th. The weather was oppressively hot during his journey; and it was very apparent that his health was failing. He, however, mustered up all his strength, and was able to attend to his duties, though greatly exhausted by labor and incipient disease. He had frequently remarked to Rev. E. R. Ames, *that he was doing his last year's work*. In his intercourse with preachers, and in all the business of conference, he was even more careful, if possible, than usual, to avoid wounding the feelings of brethren, that there might not be any unpleasant reflections mingled with the memory of their last interview with him. The session was one of great harmony. The preachers were peculiarly delighted with having him to preside in their conference. This was their twenty-seventh session, and he had been present at fourteen of them. And though they esteemed and loved all the superintendents, yet they seemed to look on Bishop Roberts, in a peculiar manner, as the father, under God, of the Missouri conference. After the business of the con-

ference had been finished, except reading the appointments and the closing exercises, the preachers and a great crowd of Church members and citizens had assembled at the courthouse to witness the final doings. The closing scene was particularly touching and interesting, and is said by those who were present to baffle description.

The Bishop leaning on his staff, as under the presentiment of never meeting them again in this world, gave out the hymn, which has been sung so many times as the valedictory of conferences :

“ And let our bodies part,
To different climes repair ;
Inseparably joined in heart
The friends of Jesus are,” &c.

The preachers and congregation united in singing, with the spirit and understanding, the whole hymn. The Rev. L. Swormstedt then led in prayer. More than ordinary Divine influence seemed to rest on the preachers and people. After prayer, and before reading the appointments, the Bishop paused a moment, and then addressed the conference in a most feeling manner, respecting the rise and progress of the Church in Missouri. He gave considerable statistical matter, referring to the number of preachers when the conference was first organized, and to the advancement of the membership. He adverted to his visit to the first Missouri conference, when it embraced within its bounds almost one-third of the entire Mississippi Valley. Many faithful Methodist preachers had fallen since then—fallen at their posts, with their armor on, and in hope of heaven. Some were now members of other conferences : others, pressed with afflictions and cares, or it might be with temptations, had retired from the work. So that of the number that composed the first conference, but one or two remained. God, however, had greatly blessed them. He stated that he had presided over their annual deliberations, just one-

half of the time since they were organized into a conference. He had marked their prosperity with joy and with thankfulness to the great Head of the Church. Where their Israel formerly numbered only units it now numbered tens, and where it numbered tens it now numbered hundreds. For the success which had crowned their labors, they ought to be thankful, and he trusted they were thankful. But they should rejoice with trembling, remembering how great was their responsibility. His age and increasing infirmities, admonished him that his work was nearly finished. He never expected to meet with them again. But if they continued to walk in the old paths, and to follow the guidance of the Great Shepherd, all would be well. The flock would increase, and they would dwell in safety.

Sometimes during his address, the Bishop was so much affected, that he was unable to proceed without pausing. Toward the close, a remark dropped from his lips which will never be forgotten by those who heard it. It was, "I feel like a father leaving his children." All present were melted into tears, whether preachers, Church members or citizens—the preachers "sorrowing most of all for the words which he spoke, that they should see his face no more." The appointments were then read, and the preachers dispersed to their several fields of labor.

The Bishop remarked to Rev. E. R. Ames, on his death-bed, that he was never well one day after the session of this conference.

When the preachers met the following year, in conference, at Lexington, Missouri, October 4th, 1843, the absence of Bishop Roberts, in connection with his death, brought the closing scene of the preceding conference to their minds with all its touching incidents. They formally introduced the subject of his death, with all the feeling of bereaved children, and narrated the words that had dropped from his lips as he addressed them for the last time. And

again they wept; and still continued to weep, because of the words which he had last spoken to them, in probability, but which were now positively fulfilled, "You will likely never see my face again." By their vote, Bishop Andrew preached a funeral sermon; and the members of conference, in mournful attendance, continued to express their high regard for departed worth, as they listened to the discourse.

From Jefferson City, he returned home; and after spending a short time there, repaired to Helena, in order to attend the Arkansas conference. His health was very feeble; and, providentially, Bishop Andrew was present, who relieved him from much of the business of conference. There he finished his conference labors and his ministerial work, except preaching a few times, and aiding in holding some religious meetings:

"Servant of God, well done," &c.

In the division of episcopal work among the Superintendents, for the year 1842, Bishop Roberts was to visit the Texas conference, which had its session at Bastrop, December 22d, 1842. At the previous session, held in San Augustine, December 28th, 1841, at which Bishop Morris presided, the following resolutions were passed in reference to the contemplated visit of Bishop Roberts:

"1. *Resolved*, That the members of this conference have heard with great pleasure, through Bishop Morris, that in the regular episcopal visitations, the attendance and services of our venerable father in the Gospel, Rev. R. R. Roberts, the senior Bishop, may be expected at the next session of the Texas conference.

"2. *Resolved*, That the members of conference will devoutly pray the great Head of the Church to give to our venerable Bishop good speed in his visit to our infant Republic.

"3. *Resolved*, That should Providence, in any event,

prevent the attendance of our beloved Superintendent, as above, we hope, most sincerely, that we may not be left without the services of one of our esteemed Superintendents at our next session, to be held at Bastrop, December 22, 1842.

“4. *Resolved*, That should Bishop Roberts, or any other of our Bishops, visit us at the next session, we will afford every facility necessary for their safe and comfortable conveyance through any part of the Republic they may wish to visit.”

In consequence of the toils of his Indian journey, and the labors of the conferences which he attended, as well as the increasing infirmities of old age, Bishop Roberts felt himself unable to attend the Texas conference. His brother, Lewis, under date of September 18th, 1842, writes in the following discouraging terms: “Your journey to Texas seems to me to be too laborious for your age and constitution. I am very doubtful on that subject. Perhaps I may see you before you undertake it. I think that I will not encourage your going. Age and debility require some rest and leisure at home.” Indeed, most persons were of the opinion that it was too severe a journey for him at his age, and under the circumstances.

Besides, the unsettled state of things in Texas, in consequence of the war with Mexico, made the visit of an old and infirm man to the Republic appear no very pleasant undertaking. He was advised, in a letter from the Rev. Littleton Fowler, dated November 13th, 1842, that Texas was then, or would be shortly, invaded by the Mexicans, both by sea and land; and that it would be dangerous to go by the way of Galveston; and, moreover, that the preachers would probably remove the seat of conference from Bastrop, which was a frontier town, and near the seat of war, to some other place; perhaps to Houston, or San Augustine. In such an event, the Bishop was advised to ascend Red

River to Natchitoches. It was then difficult, in consequence of the war, to hire horses for traveling. In view of these things, it is not marvelous that the visit to Texas was considered by his friends as beyond his strength.

Such, too, was the state of his health at the close of the Arkansas conference, that his friends strenuously advised him not to attempt his visit to Texas. He, therefore, finally determined to return home, where he arrived shortly before Christmas.

Bishop Roberts, during the last year of his life, preached the Gospel in six different states, and among four distinct Indian nations in the territories west of the United States. He presided at four annual conferences; and, in the performance of his duties, traveled on horse-back, in private carriages, in steamboats and stages, five thousand four hundred and eighty-four miles. The various duties connected with such extensive traveling, require an amount of labor for which the vigor of middle age would seem to be alone adequate. Nevertheless, the worthy veteran continued to discharge them until he could toil no longer.

The Bishops, on their journeyings to and from conferences, are earnestly beset, at many places, to stop and preach. The calls are far more numerous than can be met. The importunity and earnestness with which they are pressed, show with what interest the visits and preaching of our Bishops are regarded. We have many communications before us, sent to Bishop Roberts from brethren and citizens at a distance, in which a great variety of reasons are urged to induce him to visit and preach at certain places. We select a few.

A committee of five, deputed, no doubt, by others, sent their petition from Knoxville, Tennessee, to Greensburg, Ky., in order to induce him to visit them. They use the following language: "We, whose names are hereunto appended, earnestly solicit you to spend a few days with us,

on your journey to the Holston conference, at Kingsport. It will be very little, if any, out of your way; and you can preach for us, and, also, rest amongst us. The people generally will be very glad to see you, and hear you preach."

A very respectable committee of three write in the following pressing terms, in behalf of many citizens: "We respectfully request you to attend a three days meeting at this place, on the 21st, 22d and 23d days of next month, when on your way from the conference; or, if it will not suit your convenience to attend the meeting, we wish you, by all means, to give us a call."

Another good and zealous brother, being very desirous of securing the Sabbath services of Bishop Roberts, writes the annexed urgent request. The Bishop had purposed going another route, and spending the Sabbath at a certain place, but the person who was to convey him had failed to come up to his engagement. The zealous brother takes advantage of the circumstance, and says: "As brother P., from R., did not meet you at Middlebury, according to his proposal, I suppose you will feel that you are discharged from any obligation to spend the Sabbath in R.; therefore, I shall expect you here next Sabbath, and shall give notice accordingly. Do not disappoint us. You will take the stage on Saturday morning at 5 o'clock, and arrive here about 10. Brother P., the stage-driver, will call at brother O.'s for you. I will give him directions."

Another writes thus: "The preachers have given currency to a report that you would be here and preach at the opening of our new church. It will not be entirely finished; but will be in a suitable state to answer our purpose. The brethren have appointed a two days meeting to commence at that time. Perhaps it was imprudent for our brethren to favor the expectation of your presence; yet such is the state of things, that many will be disappointed should you

not arrive. If you are only here, even should you be unable to preach, they will be much gratified. If you will specify the place and time at which we shall meet you with a conveyance, our brethren will punctually be there."

Requests of this description were so numerous that it was impossible for the Bishop to attend to one-tenth of them. Sometimes the brethren and preachers complain that the Bishops never visit them at all, or so seldom that they consider themselves neglected. Indeed, the Bishops would have to attend many places at the same time, in order to gratify the wishes of all the people.

We stated in a former page, that the General conference of 1816 passed a resolution, making it the duty of the Book Committee at New York, to decide what sum was necessary for the family expenses of the married Bishops. This duty they performed until 1836, when the rule was so changed as to authorize a committee appointed by the annual conference, in which a Bishop or Bishops may reside, to estimate the amount necessary. We find the appropriations in the case of Bishop Roberts for the whole time as follows: from May, 1819, to May, 1832, two hundred dollars per annum; from May, 1832, to May, 1836, two hundred and fifty dollars; from May, 1836, to May, 1840, three hundred dollars. From that time to his death, four hundred dollars per year. And as he had no children, his quarterage was two hundred dollars per annum, which he received from the various conferences. His actual traveling expenses were also paid, amounting to more or less, according to the extent and manner of traveling.

In the accounts at New York, as already stated, there is no entry made of any sum appropriated to the Bishop before May, 1819, and the Agents think that the accounts must have perished in the destruction of the Book Concern, in 1836, by fire. We suppose that either there was no appropriation made, or that he never drew it. Indeed, as late as 1825,

he was slow in drawing his appropriation, as we learn from the following extract of a letter to him from Dr. Bangs, dated September 17th, 1825. "The committee appointed by the last General conference to estimate the allowance of the Bishops, have authorized you to draw from the Book Concern, for the present year, *two hundred dollars*. The same amount was allowed you last year, though from our not having made the announcement to you, it is feared that you have not received the information. If so, you will consider yourself as authorized to draw *four hundred dollars*." It is very probable, that he drew nothing at all for family expenses during the first three years of his episcopacy, and that he would never have applied for any, had he not been reminded that it was his privilege. Not but that he needed the money to supply the comforts of life; but such, as before intimated, was his independence of mind, and his patience to endure almost every privation, that he would suffer any thing rather than utter a word of information concerning his most pressing wants.

We have just seen that Bishop Roberts' allowance for house-rent, fuel and table expenses, was exceedingly moderate; and even when the quarterage both for himself and wife was added, the whole amounted to a very limited support. The fact that they sustained themselves with this amount, can only be accounted for by their industry and economy.

The Bishops, too, have expenses peculiar to themselves. If they attend a missionary, Bible or any other meeting of this description, they are expected to be the first contributors, and among the largest too. At conferences they are necessarily and continually giving. Every one knows, there are numerous collections made every year in each conference, among the preachers themselves, for needy brethren; and the Bishop must, of course, take the lead in contributing, if in nothing else. And then there are public contributions taken each year at the conferences, and the Bishop is expected

to give on such occasions; and, therefore, his contributions must be such as will furnish a good example for others. Our literary institutions are often indebted, also, to the Bishops for examples of liberal contributions. These contributions all put together make a large amount.

Bishops, too, must *use hospitality* in their own houses. They are known personally, or from reputation, by every preacher and member of the Church. The calls at their houses by their friends form a considerable item of expense, which must be met, unless they will disgrace themselves and the Church to which they belong, by shutting their doors against the entry of those friends, or by observing a parsimony which is unscriptural and unchristian.

We have sometimes heard small whisperings that our Bishops receive more than many other preachers, and that they ought to be curtailed in the amounts now appropriated. This is very unjust in reference to the men, and very injurious to the interests of the Church. Bishop Roberts was the first married Bishop in our Church. It was well for him that his family was so small, and that he had a wife who always more than supported herself, by the actual labor of her own hands. And it is well known that in consequence of his limited circumstances, and the want of support from the Church, he first fled to the wilderness of Shenango, and then of Indiana, that he might meet the exigencies of his situation, and bear his privations unobserved.

And then mark his liberality. He was always ready to contribute beyond his means, to every benevolent institution of the Church, and to meet the wants of his fellow creatures. Our literary institutions shared his largest benefactions. He felt the want of more learning himself, and he was very desirous of promoting literature in the Church. We find receipts among his papers, which go to show that he contributed a hundred dollars to each of the four following institutions, namely, the Wesleyan University, Alleghany

College, St. Charles College and Asbury University; and we presume he was equally liberal to all the other institutions of learning in our Church. The case of the New Orleans Church, to which he contributed one hundred dollars, as we have noticed in a preceding page, is only one known specimen of his liberality, out of the great many which are unknown to any except to those who shared his generosity. As a proof of his regard for our literary institutions, he made the Asbury University heir of his all.

It is a low calculation for us to make, that he expended in benevolent contributions, annually, more than he received from the Church for family expenses. He was enabled to do this, by an economy and industry at home that very few would submit to.

Still, we cannot approve of the course of Bishop Roberts, in selecting an obscure neighborhood for the place of his residence. His living example and influence while at home, were by this means nearly lost to the Church. Had he resided in some region densely populated, his influence in favor of religion would have been felt extensively. But the Church drove him to the wilderness by her parsimony, and she lost, by a just retribution, the weighty influence of his example to a serious extent.

And now will the Church herself learn what is her duty to her Bishops? We trust that she will. These venerable men have expenses peculiar to their station; and it is injurious to the interests of the Church, so to curtail them in pecuniary supplies, that they will be unable to use hospitality, prevented from being good examples to others, and even forced to settle down with their families in some retired spot, where their expenses will be less, and their privations can be borne with little embarrassment.

The *labors* of Methodist Bishops are truly arduous. Perhaps no class of clergymen perform an amount of service equal to theirs.

Look at a Bishop during the sessions of an annual conference. He is the complete drudge of the whole conference. He must be always first and last in the conference, must never leave his seat, and must watch vigilantly the doings of the whole body, so as to direct its movements in an orderly manner. And then in the intervals between the sittings of conference, every moment of his time from the beginning to the end is occupied. He and the presiding elders, as his council or advisers, have afternoon and night sessions, and often, indeed mostly, to a late hour, so as frequently to go beyond midnight. In the morning, by daylight some one knocks at his door, before he has had sufficient rest, asking an interview with him. The person is a preacher, and has something to say about his peculiar family circumstances, having a bearing on his appointment. Or perhaps he is a layman, who has come to conference to endeavor to obtain the services of a certain preacher for the benefit of his circuit or station, which, of course, is peculiarly situated, and has special claims. Scarcely has he retired, before another comes, or rather of the several who are waiting, one by one enters, and presents his plea, of one kind or another, until at length breakfast is on the table, and the Bishop is not yet done in courteously listening to the statements of his visitors. The other preachers and the family must attend family worship without him, as he is still detained. When family prayer is over, and even breakfast half done, he barely finishes the conversations with his visitors, and then conference is about to sit, and the other visitors, who came for interviews while he was at breakfast, have also their claims for an audience. But the hour is come for conference to meet, and the Bishop must be there. So the remaining conversations must be attended to on the way, and the time is well filled up, until the very moment for opening the session abruptly breaks off the interviews. In a similar way, when not engaged with the

presiding elders, every moment passes from the conclusion of the session until late at night. And then when the Bishop at length retires to his room, the several communications received during the day, and which its pressing duties did not enable him to examine, must be read and considered, and perhaps several letters written before he goes to rest; if, indeed, the pen does not drop from his hand by the encroachment of involuntary sleep, brought on by its interruption during several previous nights. When the conference is over, the Bishop breaks loose as from bondage, and casts away a weight of the most oppressive character.

Traveling, too, the vast distances from conference to conference, in almost all modes of conveyances, is laborious in the extreme; and the many cares and responsibilities of the concerns of the Church form no light burden of themselves.

The question is sometimes asked, are the labors and cares of our present Bishops greater or less than those of our former Bishops? This question has been generally answered by affirming that they are less. It is our opinion, however, that the labors and cares of our present Bishops are greater, or at least equal to those of Asbury and M'Kendree, whether we consider the sessions of conferences, their travels, or the care of the Churches.

In the early days of Methodism, the conferences were small; and, therefore, the amount of business to be done was far less than what it is in the recent or larger conferences. A great variety of topics, now introduced into conferences, were unknown in the first conferences. The business arising out of education, missions, Sabbath schools, temperance and other matters, was no part of their work. Thus presiding in conference, in the early times, was much less onerous than what it is now.

The travels, too, at present, are not inferior to the former ones. The distances are much greater; and the mode of

traveling by our present railroads, stages and steamboats, is more burdensome, during the actual time of traveling, than making daily journeys on horse-back or in carriages, the modes adopted by Asbury and M'Kendree. Besides, there is as much *new country* to be traveled now as there ever was, or even more; for their sphere of operation embraces the whole frontier territory, from the Gulf of Mexico, along the borders of civilization, through Texas, Arkansas, Missouri, the Indian territory, Iowa, Wisconsin and Michigan.

The cares of the Church, too, are no less than they formerly were.

Indeed, we doubt whether the number of Bishops has kept up with the increase of their duties.

CHAPTER XIII.

HIS DEATH AND CHARACTER.

THE winter of 1842 and 1843, which set in unusually early, and, at the same time, with great severity, interfered with the health of Bishop Roberts very much. His asthmatic complaint was increased by the severe cold, and he felt himself more easily affected than at the approach of any former winter. The impression on his health, too, was deeper than usual, and his recovery from his attacks was more slow and ominous than before. Moreover, he perhaps trusted too much to the strength of his constitution, and had recourse too sparingly, or, at least, not in sufficient time, to those natural medicinal remedies which alleviate or ward off disease. His usage, and that of his friends around him, was to resort but seldom to medical aid; and perhaps, too, that very delicate treatment which a person in great debility needs for the purpose of restoration, was rather sparingly used.

The Bishop attended a meeting in the village of Lawrenceport, the place of his residence, during Christmas of the year 1842, held by the Rev. Charles Bonner, the circuit preacher. He united cordially in the exercises of the occasion. He took the opportunity of remarking, that probably before another Christmas would return, several would be in the land of spirits, and that very probably he might be one of the number.

On the 27th of December, his nephew, George Roberts, died. This solemn event was felt severely by the Bishop. He had taken him when a small boy, and carried him across the mountains with him. He took care of him as if an only son. George, too, drank in the Bishop's spirit, and was truly a good man. The Bishop had purposed to board or live with him, and leave his aged partner in his care when he would be absent from home. The following letter, written twelve days after the death of his nephew, and addressed to his brother, Lewis, is an index to the Bishop's feelings. As far as we can learn, it is the last letter he ever wrote; and for the sake of preserving it, as well as to record its contents, we present it to our readers. It was written at Lawrenceport, and is dated January 8, 1843:

“The passing away of eight or ten days has so far mitigated the intensity of my feelings, as to permit me to announce to you the deep affliction through which we have passed since you left us. The mournful story is told in a few words. It will all be explained when I tell you that our nephew, George Roberts, is no more. He departed this life on Monday, the 27th of December, after an illness of seven days, which he bore with Christian fortitude, and resignation to the will of God. Sometimes he told us that his way was clear, and his mind was at peace, and that his soul trusted in God. A few minutes before his departure, we prayed with him; and at the close, he audibly

said, 'Amen.' He then embraced his family, taking his wife and children severally by the hand, to bid them farewell. But he was so far spent that he could not speak. He then recovered a little, and called for his aunt. She went to his bed-side, and he shook hands with her; but nature was sinking so fast that he could not utter a word. I then approached his bed-side. He reached out both hands to embrace mine. I said to him, 'George, if the Lord is present with you and precious to you, give me evidence of it by pressing my hand.' This he did, as far as his remaining strength would permit. It was enough. We asked no more. We had evidence that he was about to depart in peace, and die in the Lord. His spirit took its exit from us in the morning, just after the golden sun had risen above the horizon, and had decked our earth with light and beauty.

"The next day a funeral sermon was preached on the occasion by brother Miller, after which his remains were taken to Mount Hibernia, and interred near the remains of his father-in-law, the Rev. Mr. Miley, where he had had two sons buried before him.

"The affliction in our family circle during the last year has been very great. The room in which George breathed his last, is the one in which his son Thomas died, and, also, Susan Oldham, a few months before him. But we will not complain; for,

'The chamber where the good man meets his fate,
Is privileged beyond the common walks
Of virtuous life, quite on the verge of heaven.'

"You will learn from this intelligence, that my plan of boarding my family with George is set aside. But the rest of us live together yet, and probably shall continue to do so till spring; and it is possible that then I shall move to the old place, as Betsey now seems willing, or more than willing, to go. But all these things are concealed in futurity; and

I pray to be resigned to the will of the Lord both in life and death."

By communications from the Rev. W. Terrell and Mr. John S. M'Donald, Esq., we collect the following account of the last sacramental meeting he attended, and the last sermon but one that he preached. The Bishop, pursuant to the earnest solicitations of his friends at Bedford, a town ten miles from his residence, attended a New-year's meeting there. He was not in very good health, having for some time previous been afflicted with the asthma, which the extreme cold weather, about the first of January, contributed to aggravate. The meeting commenced with a watch-night, on Saturday evening, December 31, 1842. He concluded the services by a few impressive remarks upon the close of the year, the shortness and uncertainty of life, and the necessity of diligently improving the present moment; and then sang and prayed, making use of the hymn commencing,

"The Lord of earth and sky,
The God of ages praise," &c.

On the following day, he preached to a very large audience from these words: "He that loveth pureness of heart, for the grace of his lips, the King will be his friend," Prov. xxii, 11. The breathless silence that pervaded the congregation during his discourse, which was only now and then interrupted by a burst of feeling that few, at intervals, could suppress, told of the deep and intense interest felt by the audience in the words that fell from his lips. The sermon was one of thrilling eloquence, of melting tenderness, and deep and heavenly feeling. It was believed to have equaled his efforts of former years. He set forth, in a very convincing light, the doctrine of purity of heart, its nature, necessity and attainableness in this life. And when upon the last part of the subject, the friendship of the King, he seemed to lose sight of earth and lay hold of the glories

of the heavenly world. He finally dismissed this topic by acknowledging his inability fully to describe the glorious reward which the King of heaven would bestow on his faithful subjects, when he gathered them home. He referred his congregation to that day for a full elucidation of his subject, intimating that he would then resume the theme, and would be better prepared to unfold its beauties, and do it justice. His concluding remarks were more than pathetic. He told his audience how long he had been standing on the walls of Zion. "But," he remarked, "my work is almost done: these trembling hands—these whitened locks, portend a speedy dissolution. I expect soon to fall; but it concerns me little when or where I fall, so that I but rest in the arms of my Savior." Our informants state, that language cannot describe the effect the sermon produced on the hearers. But, little did they then think that the eloquence of that tongue and the music of that voice would so soon be hushed in death!

Immediately after the sermon, the sacrament of the Lord's supper was administered. The Bishop's strength was so exhausted, that he could only assist in the consecration of the elements. The services throughout, it is said, were peculiarly solemn and impressive.

The meeting was continued for several days; and though he preached no more during his stay, yet from time to time he engaged in conversing with the mourners, pointing them to the blood of the cross, repeating the promises of the Gospel, and lifting his voice in solemn prayer on their behalf. In such exercises as these, he always engaged both with delight to himself and profit to the penitents. This was, as already stated, the last sacramental meeting he ever attended.

On the following Tuesday morning, he left Bedford for home, on horse-back. The weather was exceedingly cold, from which he suffered greatly. The foundation was then

laid for the disease of which he died; for he took cold, which increased the asthma, and he was never well afterward.

His reason for hastening home was, that the village of Lawrenceport had not been well supplied with a school; and, at his request, a pious and well qualified young lady, Miss Clarinda Mack, designed commencing one that day. She had sent to Bedford with the Bishop, for the books necessary for immediate use, which he purchased; and though pressed to stay, he deemed it his duty to be at home in time to prevent disappointment and discouragement to either the tutor or pupils.

The following Sabbath, January 8, brother Mapes had an appointment to preach at the village. The snow had fallen very deep; and he was sick and could not attend. The Bishop went, as usual, to the Church, and having waited some time, gave out the hymn commencing,

"O for a heart to praise my God,
A heart from sin set free," &c.

When he came to the following comprehensive and expressive words,

"Perfect, and right, and pure, and good,
A copy Lord of thine,"

he seemed to be deeply impressed. After prayer, he announced his text: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," Matt. v, 8. He first spoke of what constitutes purity; and showed that evil affections must be subdued and the carnal mind destroyed; then we must possess the graces of the Holy Spirit, and Christ must rule in the heart by faith. He closed by pressing the subject home, urging his hearers to follow after purity.

It seems that, in the two last sermons which he preached, he took the subject of holiness as his theme, though from different texts. This was fitting indeed. He was himself a man of as pure a heart as his generation produced. The

people over whom he was Superintendent, have holiness as the great object in view in reference to their very existence, as well as all their labors, institutions and doctrines. It was fit for a man on the verge of the other world to be conversing and thinking on holiness to the Lord, and inculcating it on others. It will, also, be highly proper for all who read these pages to consider well, that without holiness of heart and life no man shall see the Lord. It is very important, too, that the author should be jealous over himself with a godly jealousy, lest, after spending the greater part of his life in writing books and periodicals, and in preaching the Gospel, he should be found deficient. Whoever, in short, reads this narrative, let him remember that the unholy shall not see God. May those who still live, be wise to obtain that which is an indispensable prerequisite for heaven as well as for usefulness on earth—*holiness*.

After the sermon he was quite weary, and on returning home, did not go out of the house during the rest of the day. Nevertheless, for three weeks he continued to walk about. He was, however, very much affected, and complained of difficulty in respiration.

About the end of January, he took a fresh cold, by attending a temperance meeting. This was the first meeting of the kind held at the village where he resided. So deeply was he interested in the good cause, and so anxious was he that this first effort in his vicinity should be crowned with success, that, although scarcely able to walk to the place, he went; and there, with his presence and name, manifested the zeal he felt in the movement, and the importance he attached to it. In consequence of his great debility, and his difficulty of breathing, he was unable to say any thing in the form of an address; but, after one or two speeches had been made, and several persons had signed the pledge, he arose, and with considerable difficulty and tremor of voice, remarked, "For forty years I have been preaching the

doctrine of temperance, and if I had forty years more to live, I would continue to preach temperance still. I am glad," he added, "that this good cause has found its way into our community, and is about to throw its hallowed influence around our citizens, and preserve them, I hope, from the evils and dangers of intemperance—an evil that has brought upon the human family so much misery and wretchedness. I have no fears for myself; yet if my name can be of any benefit to you, you are welcome to it." He then turned to the secretary and said, "Mr. Secretary, please receive my name." It was with great difficulty, after the adjournment of the meeting, that he reached his residence, which was distant only a few hundred yards. Subsequently to this, he went from home but once or twice.

He seemed much impressed with a sense of the near approach of death. One Sabbath evening, while Miss Mack was reading to him, at his request, the account by Bishop Morris of the death of his daughter, he seemed to fasten on her expression with great emphasis, where she gives charge that she should be buried in a plain manner.

About this time, his asthma seemed to become worse; and after a few days' use of simple remedies, which he had prescribed himself, but from which he received no relief, he sent for a physician, and after taking some medicine, appeared to be somewhat better. The physician himself was then taken sick, and, consequently, failed to attend again upon the Bishop at the appointed time, when his disease returned with greater violence.

His brother, Lewis, reached the Bishop's residence, from Illinois, about the 9th of February. The Bishop remarked, that he was glad to see him, as he had some temporal affairs to arrange, and he thought this was a favorable time. Nothing more, however, was then said or done in relation to those affairs.

Shortly afterward, his disease increased so greatly as to

call for immediate attention. On the evening of the 22d of February, Dr. Cavins, of Springville, was sent for. Up to this time, the Bishop had conversed but little, and seemed to think that his case was not dangerous. Dr. Cavins arrived about 11 or 12 o'clock on the night of the 22d of February, and found the Bishop quite ill. He still had great difficulty in breathing, and was affected with spitting of blood. He remarked to the Doctor, that he wished him to be candid with him, and give his opinion freely with reference to his condition, as he had some temporal affairs that he was desirous to arrange; and if there was any appearance of approaching dissolution, he wanted to arrange them while he was able to do so. The Doctor expressed it as his opinion, that there was nothing in the aspect of the disease that foreboded any immediate danger. The Bishop then made the reply, "Doctor, I submit myself, under God, to your care." Medicine was administered, and it seemed to have the desired effect.

We subjoin the following account of his disease, from Dr. Cavins, in a letter to the Rev. E. G. Wood: "I was called to see Bishop Roberts on the 22d of February, but did not reach him until near 11 o'clock at night. I found him in great distress, from congestion of the lungs, with a distressing cough and spitting of blood. He had been confined ten or twelve days. From a full development of the facts in connection with the history of his case, I was convinced in my mind that he labored under some organic derangement of the heart. This, in connection with the fact that he had been afflicted with paralysis for the last eight or ten years, induced me to consider him dangerous. I, however, put him under treatment for the inflammatory symptoms. He appeared to improve, and I, with the rest of his friends present, was induced to hope that he would shortly be restored to his usual health. But how sadly have we been disappointed! While asleep, and in a per-

spiration, he threw off the bed-clothes. The result was, that he took cold, and awoke with a chill, from which he relapsed, and sunk immediately into typhus fever. He lingered, without much change in his case, until he died, which was on the 26th of March, at half-past 1 o'clock, A. M."

On the 24th, 25th and 26th of February, he seemed to be improving. The difficulty of breathing had been, in a great degree, removed. He conversed more freely with his friends, many of whom were constantly calling to see him. He continued in this condition, occasionally, however, being a little worse, and then better, up to the 12th or 13th of March, when his disease assumed the character of typhus fever. Two other physicians were called in, to consult with Dr. Cavins.

On the 24th of February, he was visited by the Rev. W. Terrell, and his intimate and devoted friend, Mr. J. S. M'Donald, Esq., of Bedford, Indiana. They found him very low, and in considerable pain, and also discharging from his lungs a tough, bloody phlegm. His breathing, however, was much better than it had been. He had conversed but little during his sickness, owing, it is believed, to the pain it gave him; and he manifested but little inclination to hold conversations then. He evinced much patience in his sufferings. In the time of family worship he manifested deep engagedness, especially when his own case was alluded to, frequently responding, *Amen*, with much fervor.

On the morning of the 25th of February, Mr. Terrell went to his bed-side, and inquired if he had any presentiment how his disease would terminate. He replied, "No: when I was first taken sick, I did not apprehend any thing serious." Mr. Terrell then asked him if he had any anxiety about the matter; to which he replied, "I have none. It is true, there are some temporal matters I would like to see adjusted; but I have no fears. I think I have

an assurance, should I die, that I shall be at rest." He then, with much feeling, added, "But I have no plea, or righteousness of my own, after all that I have done. I feel that I am an unprofitable servant. But should I die, I die firmly in the belief of those doctrines I have been preaching for more than forty years." This was all the conversation that took place at that time, as brother Terrell had to leave in order to attend his appointments.

Brother Ames gives the following account of his last visit to the Bishop: "The last week in February, 1843, I reached Cincinnati, from Washington City. Bishops Roberts, Soule and Morris were to meet in the first mentioned city, on the 8th of March. As matters connected with the Indian missions would come before them, and as these missions were, for the year, under the supervision of Bishop Roberts, it was indispensable that he should be present, if possible. From the great inclemency of the weather, his age and infirmities, it was feared he might not arrive, without some assistance. I determined, therefore, to proceed directly to his residence, and bring him, if able to travel, as far as New Albany in a carriage, from whence he could proceed by water to the city. On the evening of March 2d, I reached his house. I knew nothing of his severe sickness till I entered the room where he lay. I was shocked when I saw the ravages which disease had made in his appearance. His eye was on me; and he probably witnessed my emotion. As I approached his bed-side, with difficulty he reached forth his hand, and said, in a feeble voice, 'Brother, a few days ago, I thought I had seen all my friends for the last time. I expected to leave you.' I said, 'I presume, Bishop, you were not alarmed at the prospect.' He replied promptly, 'No, brother, I had *no fears*, and I had no transports: *all was peaceful and calm.*' At this time, he thought himself considerably better; but he was very *feeble*, and not able to converse, except with difficulty. As I was

obliged to leave in the morning, I said to him, in the course of the evening, that there were some matters which I wished to communicate to him, but I feared it would weary him. He replied, 'No, I am glad to hear you talk, but I cannot say much myself.' After listening to the facts which I had to communicate, respecting some of the subjects which would come before his colleagues at their approaching meeting, he gave his opinion in a few words, and desired me to request Bishop Soule to act for him in things pertaining to the missions. 'This, I presume, *was the last official act of his life.*

"At this time his disease was thought by his physician to have taken a favorable turn, and he was expected to recover. In the morning, when I was taking my leave of him, I inquired if he desired to send any message to his colleagues, meaning Bishops Soule and Morris. He replied, 'You can tell them I am as a vessel almost wrecked—that my work is about done.' He added, after a pause, 'In looking back upon my past life, I can see some things, in which I should probably act differently, if they were to be done over again. I have been but an unprofitable servant. But,' and for a moment his countenance was lit up with a glow of triumph, and his voice regained its usual fullness and melody, 'I rejoice to know that the great Head of the Church is carrying on his work; and as long as Jesus reigns, all will be well.' I turned away, and never saw him again. In about twenty days after this he breathed his last."

Some time between the 7th and 11th of March, brother Terrell visited him the second time. He was then considerably worse, and was manifestly sinking fast. He found, on inquiry from the family, that he had conversed very little since his former visit; except with brother E. R. Ames, who had spent one night with him. Mr. Terrell took occasion, when he appeared to be at ease, to ask him,

if he still felt the same confidence he had expressed to him on a former occasion? He replied, he did, and then observed with a great degree of seriousness, "It is a very solemn thing to die." He spoke of the many ties that bind man to life, and of the painfulness of severing them. He said he had had but little inclination to converse, and assigned as a reason, that his mind had been slightly affected at times, so that he was unable to fix it on those things which most interested his heart; but that now he was considerably relieved from this affliction. When Mr. Terrell bid him farewell, the Bishop took him by the hand, and, after asking an interest in his prayers, observed with a great deal of feeling, "Brother, I feel that if I die, I shall die in the Lord, and if I live, I shall live for the Lord." These were the last words which Mr. Terrell heard him speak. What expressions dropped from his lips afterward, we have not been informed. Mr. Terrell remarks, relative to his two interviews with him, "In neither of the conversations that I had with the Bishop, did he evince any thing like *ecstasy*. Indeed, I thought he appeared to be tried; but in his sore conflict, he evidently had, in lively exercise, that faith which obtains the victory. And the tone and manner in which he expressed the last sentiment I heard him utter, showed that the victory was won. 'In patience he possessed his soul,' and 'held fast the beginning of his confidence firm unto the end.'"

On the fourteenth of March, he expressed a desire to his brother, Lewis, to arrange his temporal affairs, and also to write his will. This was accordingly done; and after the will had been read to him, three or four times, he raised himself up in his bed, and in the presence of certain persons, who were there as witnesses, he signed it. From this time to his death, he said but little. His friend, Mr. M'Donald, was with him about ten days immediately preceding his departure; and during the whole time he conversed scarcely

any. On several occasions, he manifested a great reluctance to take medicine, by remarking, "It is of no use."

About a week before his death, his brother and Mr. M'Donald approached his bed-side, and asked him where he desired to be buried, if God should see proper to call him away. He replied, "I want to be decently buried: nothing more: no pomp—no show. This poor tenement," laying his hands upon his breast, "is worth nothing more than a decent covering."

His inability to attend the Texas conference afflicted him considerably. He observed to Miss Mack, when first taken sick, that perhaps his illness was designed as a chastisement for not going there. He was exceedingly anxious to learn the proceedings of this conference; and he examined the Methodist journals immediately on their arrival, for information, until the minutes appeared.

Two weeks previous to his death, he was sometimes affected with slight delirium. His mind seemed, on these occasions, to be taken up with the missions. The one about to be established at Fort Coffee, occupied his attention much. He imagined that three Indians were watching his sick bed. And when perfectly rational, he expressed deep anxiety about procuring a proper person to take care of this mission, as well as obtaining a supply of school teachers.

On the Friday previous to his death, while a number of persons were in his room, he inquired of the doctor, whether there would be any impropriety, under the circumstances, in having prayer. The doctor replied, there would not, if he desired it. A chapter was then read, and a prayer offered up by a brother who was present. After this, there was a momentary pause, when the Bishop said, "I should like you to go on with your prayer meeting." He, himself, then called upon two other persons to pray. Thus the last social meeting at which he was present, was a prayer

meeting in his own house. How appropriate are the beautiful lines of the poet :

“Prayer is the Christian’s vital breath—
The Christian’s native air :
His watchword at the gates of death :
He enters heaven by prayer.”

The last vocal prayer that he ever offered was while in his chair, after he had become unable to kneel. It was at the morning devotions. He asked the physician to read a chapter, and he repeated the Lord’s prayer himself with great solemnity, and then added a few short sentences expressive of thankfulness to the Most High, and confidence in his truth and faithfulness.

For some days previous to his death, he did not seem to suffer any pain. On Friday, the 24th of March, however, he began to show symptoms of approaching dissolution ; and at one time during the day, it was supposed he was dying. The paroxysm, however, passed off, and through the night and the following day, he lay comparatively easy, yet was sinking rapidly. On Saturday night, at ten o’clock, he was attacked with another paroxysm, and struggled, apparently in great pain, until about half past one o’clock, on Sabbath morning. He retained the exercise of his senses to the end, and just before he expired, looked around on all that were in the room. He appeared to be bidding them his last adieu. He then raised both his hands, as if in the act of offering himself to God for the last time ; and in a few moments, he ceased to breathe. This was at a half past one o’clock on Sunday morning, the 26th of March, 1843. From the appearance of his countenance scarcely any one would have thought that death had been there : it was placid and serene. Still there had been a severe struggle before and toward his exit.

We are indebted to the Rev. C. W. Ruter’s Sermon for the following letter written by the Rev. J. Prossor, a pious

and intelligent physician, who was with him in his last moments :

“The Bishop’s sickness was long and painful, and, in the treatment, it became necessary to blister him extensively. All this he bore without a murmur; not one word of complaint escaped him; and in his sickness throughout, he exhibited the most happy example of Christian patience, resignation and courage. I was with him in the closing scene, (and was the only one of his physicians present on that occasion.) I recollect to have frequently heard him remark, ‘that, in health, men might deceive the most critical observer, and even themselves, but that the death scene generally stamped the character with its true value.’ He has been tried by this standard, and has, I have no doubt, passed the dreadful ordeal triumphantly. From the nature of his disease, he was not able to converse much during his last illness; but from what he did say, we have no doubt that he felt assured that his work was done, and that a crown of life awaited him. He did not speak (so as to be understood) for some two days before his dissolution; but I have no doubt that he retained to the last moment, and entered upon his inheritance on the other side of Jordan, in full possession of his mental faculties.

“Bishop Roberts, from the happy balance of his mind, was not subject to sudden or violent emotion. His religious feelings, like the waters of the unruffled ocean, were *clear, calm and deep*. Those feelings did not forsake him in the last trying hour. It is true he did not speak; but by the serenity of his countenance, and gestures the most expressive, he manifested the triumph of the soul. You will, doubtless, well recollect that, in his public exercises, when in his happiest mood, his countenance wore a most heavenly expression, while, with both hands gracefully extended, *in a manner peculiar to himself*, he gave evidence of the unutterable joy which swelled his bosom; and it was with

these signs, in his last struggle, he continued to indicate to us the calm triumph of the mind, until we lost sight of him in the dark valley of death. It has been my lot to witness many death-bed scenes; but before, *NONE LIKE THIS*. We did not feel that we were standing by the bed of death, but that we were honored witnesses of the exaltation of our beloved Bishop to the joys of his Lord; and, even while performing the last melancholy office of closing his sightless eyes, we felt the force of those beautiful lines of the poet,

‘The chamber where the good man meets his fate,
Is privileged beyond the common walks
Of virtuous life, quite on the verge of heaven.’

Nor were we alone impressed with those sentiments; for, before we had given utterance to our feelings, his brother, Lewis Roberts, who was present, in a voice of ‘mournful pleasure,’ quoted those beautiful lines.”

Mrs. Roberts remarked, though she had often feared, when he was leaving home on his long tours, that he would not return, yet she never opposed his going. She further stated, that he had told her he believed he should die at home—an event so desirable to both. She inquired, why he thought so? To which he replied, he had received such an impression when engaged in prayer.

On Monday, the 27th of March, his funeral sermon was preached by Rev. E. G. Wood, of the Indiana conference, at the Bishop’s residence, to a large congregation, from Rev. xiv, 13: “And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.” It was the intention to proceed immediately to the grave; but, in consequence of the extreme inclemency of the weather, it was thought advisable to defer going till the next day. Accordingly, on Tuesday, the 28th, his body was deposited in a lonely corn-field on his own farm. This spot is in a

remote corner of Lawrence county, Indiana, in a secluded neighborhood—to or near which no leading road conducts the traveler. Either narrow horse-paths, or scarcely visible wagon-tracks, lead to the farm. With the best directions, it would be difficult for a stranger to find the place where he was buried. In this sequestered spot, for several months, laid the remains of the senior Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, who had been forty-one years a traveling preacher and twenty-seven a Bishop, and who, in performing the arduous duties of his charge, had traveled in twenty states of the Union during one year.

It has been supposed by many, that Bishop Roberts was buried at the place which he himself had previously selected. We have good reason to believe that this was not the case. In fact, he expressed no special preference for any one place. This we attribute to his extreme modesty.

Many of his friends in the Church were dissatisfied with the location of his final resting place. In Louisville, New Albany, Jeffersonville, Madison, Cincinnati, and other towns and cities, they would gladly have gone to the expense of reintering his remains among them, and would, at the same time, have conformed, in regard to plainness, with his known wishes when alive. We are informed, too, that a proposal was made by the brethren of Baltimore to convey his remains to that city, and deposit them in the vault under the pulpit of the Eutaw church, where the ashes of Asbury and Emory lie. But it seemed proper, as by common consent, that the Indiana conference should have the privilege of deciding on the question of his reinterment.

The death of Bishop Roberts, was felt by the whole Methodist community as a great loss. At most of the conferences held since his death, a funeral sermon has been preached by one of the Bishops attending, at the request of its members. Meetings of preachers and members, too,

have been held in many places, and resolutions, expressive of their high regard for his public and private Christian virtues, adopted, and funeral discourses delivered.

The ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Cincinnati and its vicinity, held a meeting on the 8th of April, 1843, in reference to the death of Bishop Roberts, at which the following preamble and resolutions, submitted by Rev. J. F. Wright, were adopted :

“Whereas, it has pleased Almighty God, in his mysterious wisdom, to remove from the Church militant to the Church triumphant, his faithful servant, the venerable Bishop Roberts; therefore,

“*Resolved*, That in the death of the Rev. Robert R. Roberts, senior Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, we have lost a most amiable friend, and an honored fellow-laborer in Christ’s vineyard, whose memory is endeared to us by the tenderest recollections; and, that by the same afflicting providence, the Church is deprived of one of her most esteemed and useful ministers.

“*Resolved*, That while we and the whole Church should be meekly resigned to this dispensation, and should thank a gracious God that our beloved Bishop, in his removal from toil and pain, has left us full of assurance that he has entered into rest, we should, also, improve this great public affliction to our advancement in holiness, that we may be prepared for a reunion with our departed and sainted friend in heaven.

“*Resolved*, That we affectionately invite the friends and acquaintances of Bishop Roberts, near or remote, to be present with us on Monday, May 1st, at 10 o’clock, A. M., in Wesley Chapel, of this city, and join us in hearing the funeral sermon, by the Rev. Charles Elliott, and in the funeral solemnities of the occasion.

“*Resolved*, That we tender to our bereaved sister Roberts, the assurance of our sympathy and prayers in this her

deep affliction, and that a copy of these resolutions be forwarded to her by the Secretary."

Agreeably to the previous arrangements, a sermon was delivered on the 1st of May, 1843, by the author of this work, in Wesley Chapel, at which a number of ministers and private members attended, from the neighboring towns and country. The text was, "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace," Psalms xxxvii, 37. We took occasion to show,

I. The character of the "perfect man:"

II. His end—"peace;" and,

III. Made an application of the text to the life, death, and character of Bishop Roberts.

At a meeting of the preachers of Madison district, Indiana conference, too, several very appropriate resolutions were passed; and the Rev. C. W. Ruter was requested to preach a funeral sermon on the death of the Bishop at each of his quarterly meetings. From the resolutions, we select the two following:

"That, as a man, a Christian, a minister, and a Bishop (or Overseer) of the flock of Christ, his memory is endeared especially to us, as members of the Indiana annual conference, where for many years he lived, and where he died; and that we never can cease to remember him as our beloved father, friend, and highly honored fellow-laborer in Christ.

"That it becomes us most devoutly to supplicate Almighty God to cause the mantle of our Elijah to fall upon some faithful Elisha, whose wisdom, experience, piety and physical energies, shall fit him to follow in the footsteps of so worthy a predecessor."

The brethren in St. Louis, also, held a meeting, and, among other resolutions, passed the following:

"*Resolved*, That while the entire Methodist Episcopal Church is called to mourn the departure of one of her most

distinguished ministers and brightest ornaments, *we* have special cause to hold him in esteem and veneration as a father of our Church in Missouri; and ‘though dead he yet speaketh,’ having left us an example that we should walk in his steps; and, although we shall see him no more among us, his solicitude and labors for our prosperity will ever live in our undying affections.”

At Dayton, Ohio, the Rev. James B. Finley likewise preached a funeral sermon in reference to the death of Bishop Roberts. The Rev. Henry B. Bascom, too, preached one at Louisville, Kentucky, to a large congregation. And in New Albany, Indiana, the memory of the Bishop was also honored by appropriate religious exercises.

The Indiana conference, at their last session, held in Crawfordsville, October 18th, 1843, passed the following resolutions relative to the removal of his remains to Greencastle, the seat of the Indiana University.

“1. *Resolved*, That we regard with deep gratitude that Providence which granted us the privilege of claiming, for the period of twenty-four years, Bishop Roberts as a fellow-citizen and a patriarchal minister resident among us.

“2. *Resolved*, That in view of the intellectual and moral worth of Bishop Roberts, and his kind regards for us and the whole Church, his death be considered as a paternal bereavement to the Church in general, and to the Indiana conference in particular, which calls for proper humiliation and resignation.

“3. *Resolved*, That we shall be greatly wanting to ourselves and to the cause of God, if we do not imbibe his spirit and imitate his wholesome and godly example.

“4. *Resolved*, That the remains of the venerable Bishop (the widow consenting,) be removed from their present obscure lodgment, and be transferred to Greencastle.

“5. *Resolved*, That a suitable monument or tombstone be erected to the memory of the Bishop.

“6. *Resolved*, That the expenses incurred in carrying into effect the last two resolutions, be met by the Indiana conference; and should the conference be divided, by the two conferences jointly, according to their numerical strength.

“7. *Resolved*, That Bishop Soule be requested to furnish a suitable epitaph or inscription for the Bishop's tomb.

“8. *Resolved*, That M. Simpson, the presiding elder of the Greencastle district, and the presiding elder of the district in which Bishop Roberts was buried, be a committee to carry into effect the foregoing resolutions.

“9. *Resolved*, That the foregoing resolutions be spread on the journals of this conference, and a copy of them be forwarded to the aged widow of the Bishop.”

In pursuance of the foregoing resolutions, on Thursday, the 18th of January, 1844, the disinterred body of the late Bishop Roberts, accompanied by Mr. Milligan and brother M'Red, a local preacher, and Rev. Messrs. J. Miller, C. Nutt, E. Genung, W. Dorsey and L. Forbes, members of the Indiana annual conference, was met near Greencastle by a procession, composed of the citizens, and faculty and students of the University. Proceeding to the University, the body was deposited in the chapel, and on a beautiful knob, in the college grounds, a grave was prepared. The trustees of the University met, and decided that the reinterment should take place the next morning, and appointed E. R. Ames, J. Cowgill and W. K. Cooper, a committee from their own body, to act with the committee that had been appointed by the conference, in making suitable arrangements. At the specified time, the spacious chapel of the University was filled by those who came from far and near to engage in the solemn ceremonies of the occasion. The opening exercises were performed by the Rev. John Miller. After prayer, was sung the beautiful hymn, “Shed not a tear.”

Professor Larrabee then delivered the following excellent address :

“FRIENDS AND BRETHREN,—Bishop Roberts, whose mortal remains, now disinterred, lie before you, was buried in a very retired and obscure place, far away from public resort, in a spot distinguished in no way, by nature or art. There in the open corn-field, without a path to lead to it, or a stone to mark it, was the grave of the good man, whom the Church loved and honored. The spontaneous sentiment of the Church, however, seemed to demand his removal to some more suitable spot, where he might receive that honor which the living love to pay to the memory of the good and the great.

“We have understood, that the people of Baltimore were desirous of removing his remains to their city, and depositing them beside those of the venerated Asbury. The Kentucky conference desired to have him removed to Louisville, and others wished that New Albany, or some other town on the Ohio River, should be his final resting place. At the last session of the Indiana conference, it was proposed to remove his remains to this place, and to select some spot near this edifice, where his grave might be made, and a monument erected over it. This proposition was received with a hearty and unanimous approval by the conference, and a committee of Revs. M. Simpson, J. Miller and G. M. Beswick, were appointed to carry the resolution into effect.

“To us it appears, that no place so suitable as this could have been selected. Though Bishop Roberts was deeply interested in the prosperity of the Church, in every section of her widely extended work, yet among all her literary and benevolent institutions, this University was his favorite. His power of observation enabled him to see and appreciate the value and importance of this institution, and the rank in honor and usefulness which it must attain. He, therefore,

made the Indiana Asbury University his only residuary legatee, bestowing upon it all his property which could be spared after supporting his aged widow and assisting some dependent relatives.

“There is also connected with this place *a permanent interest*, which will make it, through successive generations, the resort of those who are interested in the prosperity of our Church. Commercial cities may not retain an interest so enduring. Changes in the laws of commerce, against which no human sagacity can provide, may yet number the monumental city of the Chesapeake, like the hundred gated Thebes of the Nile, among the things lost on earth. Causes may conspire, in the long lapse of time, to number the days of our own commercial cities on the Ohio. The plough may yet pass over their sites, and the luxuriant corn grow in their streets, while other towns, on sites now unknown and unthought of, may supply their places. But here is formed an institution which *must live and flourish* and remain an object of deep interest.

“The seventy thousand members of our Church in Indiana, as well as thousands more who are not in Church fellowship with us, have enshrined the Asbury University in their hearts, and its friends will continue to increase with the growth of the Church and the prosperity of the state. When Time shall have laid his crumbling touch upon this edifice, another, more beautiful and noble, shall arise in its place. Here, through successive ages, shall come up from the fertile plains and green valleys—from the hills of the Ohio—from the prairies of the Wabash—and from the shores of Michigan, the youth, the strength and hope of the land, to enter the lists for the race, and to compete for the prize which learning holds out to her votaries; while at each annual festival, the venerable and beautiful shall come to witness the ceremonies. Here, then, may they behold on that canvass, the image, and on that knoll, the grave, of

the man of God, who was so long identified with the history of the Church, and whose memory *should never die*.

“There is interwoven with the very frame-work of human nature, a sentiment whose influence has led to the scene before us. It is a sentiment of respect and veneration for the departed. It is this which leads us to regard the place where rest the dead, as holy ground, and to desire that we ourselves, when life is over, may sleep by the side of those we have known and loved. When the old patriarch Jacob was expiring in Egypt, he charged his sons to bury him in the land of Palestine, with his fathers, where had been buried Abraham and Sarah, and Isaac and Rebecca, and where he had buried Leah. And when Joseph was dying, his last request was, that when God should visit his people and bring them out of Egypt unto the land of promise, they should carry up his remains and bury him with his fathers. Barzillai, the Gileadite, declined in his old age, the offer of a home in the house of the king, that he might return to his native place and be buried by the grave of his father and of his mother. Among the people of the east, the dwellings of the dead were much more permanent and substantial than those of the living. Of the innumerable multitudes of living men who once swarmed on the banks of the Nile, not one solitary habitation is left; but their tombs still remain; and in those tombs are the bodies of the dead preserved at immense expense and care. The tombs of Palestine were hewn out of the solid rock. In one of these was Jesus laid, and to it Mary went to weep. The surviving Chieftain of Ilion’s scattered bands, in all his wanderings toward Italy, carried with him the remains of his father, the old Anchises. And Andromache, the wife of Hector, when carried away into captivity, on the inhospitable coasts of Thrace, erected a mound of green turf to the memory of her husband, and performed over it annually the funeral ceremonies of her country. Even the

North American Indian, exhibits the same propensity. Forced by circumstances beyond his control to leave his native land, his last, deep drawn sigh is heaved from his bosom over the grave of his fathers; and his last lingering look, as he takes up his line of march for the west, is toward the place where lie the departed of his tribe. We acknowledge ourselves subject to the same influences. It is this universal and undying sentiment of humanity which has brought us together now. In that coffin rests the body of one who, while living, was an honor to our state, of which he was so long a citizen, to the Church, of which he was a good minister, and to humanity, of which he was a noble specimen. On that beautiful spot, we have made his grave. There we will deposit his body in the bosom of earth, the common mother of all that is mortal. We will gather over him a mound of green, fresh turf, and on it we will erect a monument of marble. Around his grave shall bloom the violet of spring and the rose of summer. No gloom can hang around that spot. No sadness can linger there. The bright beams of the sun will fall upon it, when first he rises above the eastern hills and when last he appears above the western forest. The child will not fear, in the dimness of twilight, to pass alone by the beautiful spot where the good man is buried. He might deem that sainted spirit the guardian genius of the place. Who would shun the place where sleep the good? Who loves not to linger at twilight among the graves of the gentle and the lovely? Why may we not believe that the spirits of the good yet hold communion with our own spirits? Ah, I sometimes seem to hear the tones of voices, no longer mortal, speaking to me in accents sweet as the harp of Ariel—the voices of loved ones long since departed. I see beaming on me with angelic loveliness, the eye that watched over my sleeping infancy. I feel the pressure of the gentle hand that guided my youthful steps. I feel that a spell is on me which I

could not break if I would, and which I would not if I could. We need not fear to cherish such sentiments. They can do us no harm, and may do us much good.

“While we see before us the body of this good man raised from the grave, we are naturally reminded of that other resurrection, in which both he and we shall have a part. Though the earth has now given up his body, it is but for a moment. She will soon claim it again. But in that resurrection, she will claim it no more. The body is now there, but the spell of death is yet on it. The irresistible power of corruption is yet operative. But then the spell of death will be broken, and the power of corruption will cease. He will arise in the image of his Savior, with a body all spiritual and glorious. That body will have no wrinkle of care on the brow, nor furrow of age on the cheek. That eye will no longer be dim, nor that voice silent. And at that scene you, and I, and all of us, will be present. We shall not be mere spectators, but we shall have an eternal weight of interest in the events then to occur. May we be of those, of whom it shall be said, ‘Blessed and holy are they who have part in the first resurrection, for on such the second death hath no power.’”

After the address, the body was removed to the grave, where the funeral service was read by President Simpson. The coffin was then lowered down, and the earth gathered over it; to be disturbed no more till those who are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God.

The author of this biography is exceedingly pleased to avail himself of the valuable aid of the Rev. L. L. Hamline, in furnishing the character of Bishop Roberts. The following delineation of the various features of the Bishop's character was prepared by him, and published in the April number, for the year 1844, of the Ladies' Repository, of which he is the editor. The biographer of the Bishop

believes this to be superior to any thing which he can write, and, therefore, adopts it as the best description which we can furnish.

“The character of Bishop Roberts is a theme for *pious* rather than curious minds. It displays nothing bold, and is associated with nothing tragic or romantic. He never commanded conquering armies, nor directed the sacking and burning of towns or cities. He never met a challenged foe or friend in mortal combat. We know not that he ever fell among thieves, or escaped an ambush, or suffered imprisonment or shipwreck. His life is not a region of mountains and valleys—these so deep and covert that the sunbeams cannot penetrate them, and those so lofty as to be crowned with summer snows. Yet, like a rolling country, it has charms of some sort, even as the prairie, with its groves and wild flowers, is by no means devoid of nature’s graces and enchantments. He who loves nothing but crags and cataracts, need not read this description; but whoever delights to trace a stream in its gentle meanderings through fields, which it moistens and fertilizes, may feel some interest in this brief notice.

“Bishop Roberts was comely in his person. His stature was about five feet, ten inches. His frame was heavy and robust, and in middle and later life corpulent. But his old age was not helpless; and up to within a year of his death, (beyond which we did not see him,) his walk and all his motions indicated that he was formed for physical action and endurance. God, who called him, at a given period, to a work which demanded much physical force, endowed him, in this respect, for his vocation. He sat, stood and moved with great dignity, in private and in public, without any effort or stiffness. There was great uniformity in his appearance and manners. He was never caught in a slight overt swell, or momentary pompousness, as though the inner man were slightly high-blown, or the sails of his

soul were unreefed under the sudden pressure of a breeze of favor or applause. And as he was not easily puffed up—a mood which we challenge all willing or unwilling witnesses to charge on him—so neither was he wont to be cowered. He endured ill treatment, if necessary, with the calm dignity of unaffected meekness. We once saw him tested in this way; and in no circumstances did he ever win from us greater admiration.

“He had large—not gross—features. His countenance expressed as much of manly benignity as the human face can well set forth. His eye was blue; and its *calmness* was particularly noticeable. Under provocations to inward change, it did not report much that seemed worthy of notice, except that the provocation had taken little or no effect. In a word, it was not a *kindling* eye. It did not, under the colorings of inward emotion, sparkle with inflamed lustre. We cannot describe this feature of the Bishop better than to say he had a *calm, blue eye*. His personal presence—*‘tout ensemble’*—was truly venerable, and commanded great respect.

“His manners were wholly suited to his profession and his sphere. He was exceedingly unaffected, which is more important than any other single item in reckoning up the severalties of what is called ‘good manners.’ His artlessness was manifest to all, for it was unequivocal as sunshine. Every glance, and smile, and cadence, was in the spirit and the style of true *simplicity*. This being uniform, imparted a peculiar charm to his cheerful domestic and social fellowships. He was, in heart, sincere. And when an actor is without disguise, his movements will, of course, seem unconstrained. His were so. In private and in public, *naturalness* was so prominent in the Bishop’s character, that the most unpracticed observer would scarcely fail to remark it.

“We shall err, if we conclude that this simplicity had

in it any thing improperly juvenile or childish. Incompetent judges, who knew not his station and character, might blunder, and infer that, as he was plain and unpretending, so, also, he was without merit and consideration; but there was little danger that he should be so mistaken by sagacious and experienced observers.

“Nor must it be inferred that he had not the talent, or inclination, to judge of the manners of those with whom he mingled. None noticed more promptly than he did, the improprieties of behavior which occurred under his observation. We have seen him blush like an embarrassed child, at the errors and self-exposure of others in the conference-room, when he had no manner of concern in the misfortune, except an interest of sympathy for the perpetrator of the folly. On one occasion, when a rule of conference prescribed that no member should speak a second time on any resolution, till all others, who desired it, had enjoyed the opportunity, two brethren arose together. The Bishop awarded the floor to the elder, who had not yet spoken. But the younger, who had already made two efforts, commenced declaiming in the most impassioned tones. ‘That brother,’ said the Bishop, ‘is now up the *third time*, and here is a much older brother on his feet, who has not spoken at all. The rules give him the floor, and I wish he might be permitted to speak—I think the conference wish to hear him.’ Meanwhile, the younger speaker was under full way, and, in the heat of his endeavor, never paused to hear what the Bishop said. The members on all sides were staring at his effrontery with astonishment, and could scarcely restrain their indignation. The Bishop said no more; but his face was crimsoned with blushes for the misfortune of the young orator, who had placed himself in a position so repulsive before his brethren and the spectators.

“The religion of Bishop Roberts was deep, ardent,

uniform and active. His piety was *deep*. Early subdued by Divine grace, the spirit of religion had become as a second nature.

“Some of us were so late in our return to God, (blessed be his name that we were ever brought to love him!) that our religion, though it makes us joyful in Christ, seems scarcely to sit easy or naturally upon us, as it does on those who were early and faithful in their profession. Like scholars without early advantages, who are always apt to betray the defects of juvenile training, by incorrect orthography, or some other little matter, and whose science, though extensive, does not appear to form a part of their mental constitution, (as it does in cases of precocious scholarship;) so sinful tempers and habits, long indulged and strongly fortified, do sometimes, after the heart is changed, mar the symmetry of Christian character. But Bishop Roberts was an example of the intimate blending of our holy religion with all the sanctified elements of the being. There was an unconstrained religiousness in all his types of manner—in every mood, which was exceedingly proper and attractive. He never seemed to *strive* to be religious, but appeared to be spontaneously so. Doubtless, he *did* strive; but the effort itself had become so much a habit, that it did not look like striving.

“His piety was *ardent*. It was not light without heat—a phosphorescence which could neither kindle nor consume. It is true, that he was well trained in Christian doctrines and ethics. He was sufficiently meditative; and his *intellect* was religious. But this is so common, especially with the ministers of Christ, that it need not be testified of those who occupied prominent ecclesiastical stations. But ardent devotion is another thing—less common, and not certainly to be inferred from any man’s sphere, however responsible or prominent. But none could be intimate with the Bishop, and note his manners in private and in public, without gath-

ering sufficient proofs that his heart, as well as his understanding, was deeply imbued with the Spirit of Christ, and was controlled by the impulses of charity and inward godliness.

“On this point, we testify what we have witnessed in various circumstances, and at different times. We never saw him at class meeting; but we observed him at prayer meetings and love feasts. There he seemed to forget that any other dignity ever attached to him than that of the humblest follower of the Lamb. In 1841 we saw him rise to speak in a large love feast. He commenced thus: ‘Brothers and sisters, I feel a desire to rise and tell you what Jesus has done for *my* soul.’ Struck with the simplicity and the *commonness* of his language, we immediately treasured it up in our memory. Had a stranger to Bishop Roberts entered the door at that moment, he would probably (but for his position in the pulpit) have set the speaker down as a plain old farmer, of good sense and sincere piety, but far less episcopal in his manner than half the brethren present. And he would have inferred, from his manner, that his whole heart was absorbed in the one great and glorious interest of personal religion—of seeking and enjoying the in-dwelling God. Sanguine temperaments, though chastened and subdued, when kindled by fire from heaven, as was the heart of Bishop Roberts, are apt to glow, as his did, with intense ardor. We have said he had not a kindling eye; but he had a flaming heart. He was no stranger to deep emotion. We have seen him when grace was a flame in the soul, and he scarcely knew how to express his rapture. We remember that once, as he sat behind a preacher who spoke with great zeal, he burst out in a loud and passionate exclamation, and *might* have been pronounced, by certain Christians of the colder sort, ‘beside’ himself.

“But it may be asked, how so much ardor could have been blended with the calmness, or *evenness*, which we

have ascribed to him. We answer, that it depends in part upon the fact, that his religion was also *uniform*. It did not kindle up, to blaze a moment, and then expire. It was a lamp well fed, and always lighted. We often find ardor blended with variableness; and this begets a prejudice in our minds against it. But, then, this variableness is an accidental, not a necessary accompaniment of glowing Christian zeal. Angels are all ardor, yet never waning in their holy zeal and raptures. So of glorified saints, who 'rest not day nor night.' And as in heaven, so on earth there may be in us *unremitted* ardor. Paul, Fletcher, and (near the close of life) the godly Payson, are examples to the point. Bishop Roberts belonged to the same class in the great Teacher's school.

"His piety was *active*. No monkish tendencies restrained his inward zeal. In a hermit's cell, or the ascetic's cloister, he would have been as an eagle caged. A continent was narrow enough for him. Like the 'angel flying through the midst of heaven,' his charity sought audience of nations. Think of the expanded field of his ministry; and instead of gradually diminishing it, as advancing age might have suggested, in the very last spring months of his life he breaks away from the assigned bounds of his episcopal toil, and, unappointed of all but God, plunges into western wilds, on extra missions toward the setting sun. We know not how the miasmatic agencies of the unsettled regions through which he then traveled affected his health, or were remotely connected with his death; but we think of him in these extreme wanderings as we think of the setting sun, when, in his pure and cloudless occident, he seems to pour his brightest beams over the landscape, as he pauses a moment to bid the hemisphere adieu.

"As a preacher, his manner was earnest rather than impassioned. He spoke with great fluency, and his words were well chosen. They did not seem to be 'sought out,'

and yet they were 'acceptable.' He never labored for thoughts or language. They came spontaneously, like water flowing downward. He was a student, yet his sermons never 'smelt of the lamp.' To the writer he was one of the most impressive speakers, and yet we can scarcely tell why. He had the same unaffected manner in the pulpit, which rendered him so agreeable in private.

"His discourses were didactic, yet by no means wanting in hortatory effect or pathos. They were very systematic, without any apparent labor or pains to make them so. His eye, as we have already described it, did not speak to the audience by intense, wild flashings, but its calm and benevolent expression most pleasingly impressed the hearer. He was free from defect—was, as an orator, in this respect, perfect.

"It is said of Curran, that in his common moods he was rapid and wholly uninteresting—that his person was diminutive and his attire slovenly—that his gestures were ungraceful, his countenance spiritless, and his eye perfectly destitute of the sparkle of genius, or even the light of intelligence. When he commenced a forensic address, the witnesses say he was inanimate and repulsive, and that a stranger would have been tempted, by his unpromising appearance, to withdraw from the court-room. But as he pursued his argument, and his heart waxed warm under its inspiration, the man was strangely transformed into the *orator*. It is affirmed that his very stature seemed to change, and he rose in the eye of the astonished spectator into a form of the most imposing and commanding dignity. His unmeaning features were remolded, and became all animate and seemingly immortal with the kindling fervors of his roused and glowing genius, until—to use the language of a celebrated writer—'he alone seemed to be majestic in creation.'

"This was not Bishop Roberts. He was no such orator

as Curran. Yet he was an orator. We hazard nothing in emphatically re-affirming that he was an orator. For eloquence is as various as beauty. It is now a torrent, and now a gently flowing stream—now a rushing tempest, and now a soft, refreshing breeze. But it is always something that charms the inward sense, which was precisely the effect of the Bishop's happy efforts.

“His delivery was uniform. It was a full current from the beginning, and flowed on evenly to the end. He commenced with a pitch of the voice which all could hear distinctly. He never committed the most glaring of all errors in a public speaker—that of restraining the voice at the beginning, so that not a fourth of the audience can gather his meaning for the first ten minutes, and, of course, must lose the force of what remains. Unlike Curran and many others, the first sentence of his lips began to find favor with the hearer.

“We will add—not so much for his memory's sake, as for the good of Christ's living ministers—that Bishop Roberts *preached from experience*; not that he spoke *of* himself, but *from* himself; that is, he testified what he had felt and therefore knew. When he proclaimed that ‘Christ Jesus came into the world to save,’ it was not a mere speculation, affirmed to him by Scriptural authority, sacred as it is; but it was also an experimental verity, assured to him by unequivocal consciousness—by the witnessing of the Divine Spirit with his own. He was not—as we fear many are in the sight of the great Shepherd—a hireling, whose profane end is wordly gain. He made merchandise of none. He was not a nurse applying the spoon or bottle, to feed others on what himself had never tasted, and could not relish. He first feasted his own soul on the life-giving promises, and, then, like a mother to her infant, he poured out the ‘sincere milk of the word’ from his own overflowing bosom, to the precious nurslings of Christ's growing

family. Happy pastor, who thus cherishing the flock, is himself fed in distributing to others !

“ Let us, in conclusion, glance at the character of Bishop Roberts, as it was unfolded in his last and most responsible relation to the Church. The functions with which he was clothed, by the free and competent suffrages of his ecclesiastical peers, (and by the act of the whole Church, represented in his peers,) brought upon him the severest embarrassments of his ministerial life, and afforded the surest test of his integrity and worth.

“ He was a Bishop. That office he derived from the purest source, and executed by the highest warrant known upon earth. In harmony with its holy origin and perfect sanction, (we speak not now of carnal successions, or other wanton fables,) his episcopal duties were exceedingly onerous, and influential to an unrivaled extent. His incumbency was not like that of a mere diocesan, with a flock of two, five, or ten thousand souls. His concurrent jurisdiction was over hundreds of thousands. The *clergy* alone of his supervision, were more than the membership of three or four surrounding dioceses of a sister Church.

“ In this elevated sphere, he proved to all how richly, for self-control and public duty, the grace of God endowed him. He still ‘ magnified his office.’ What was worthy of special notice in his episcopal career, may be set forth under the heads of *meekness, diligence, decision and discretion.*

“ And first in order is his meekness. In him the ‘ Bishop’ did not spoil the man, nor mar the Christian, nor, by exalting, minify the minister. *Bishop Roberts* was never in the way of *Mr. Roberts, brother Roberts, or Rev. R. R. Roberts.* The apostle did not hinder the disciple. If *primus inter pares*, (first among equals,) he did not forget the important fact that his *peers placed him first*, and that through them ‘ the Holy Ghost made him overseer.’ It was a pleasant thing to sit beside him in the parlor, or before

him in the conference-room, and note with what Christian modesty and meekness he indulged his free communings with all the flock of God.

“In 183— a declaimer against Bishops lectured in N., where we were stationed. He described them as lordly and tyrannical, passing through the country in a style not much less magnificent than that of the finical *Borgia*, the pompous son of the Pope. The citizens became indignant at Methodism, which fostered, as they supposed, a high-blown aristocracy. A few weeks after, Bishop Roberts providentially came along, and spent a Sabbath with us. The news spread on all sides, that one of the puffed up *magnates* would preach at eleven o'clock. The house was early over-filled with the curious and the prejudiced, to witness a *display*. In due time forth came the Bishop in his worn calico ‘robe,’ (which probably cost twelve and a half cents per yard,) and all his other vestments in strict keeping with its splendor. Seldom were a people more surprised than at his appearance and address. And as the good old man preached Jesus in his usual artless tones and manner, the strong premature current of indignation was changed to the most unbounded admiration. The next day the irreligious on all sides were uttering bold denunciations against ‘the hypocritical vilifier of Methodist Bishops;’ and not long after, the seceders, to whom that man had lectured, gave up their new church, returned in a body, and left no relic, as we are aware, of their former disaffection towards Episcopal Methodists or their Bishops.

“As to his *diligence*, enough has been said to prove that he was not an idler in the vineyard. No man could consecrate his energies more undividedly to the cause of Christ. Through the infirmities of age and the power of disease, he failed in a few instances to perform the labor which fell to him in the division of the work. But the only wonder is, that he did not oftener fail. And it is admirable that some

of his colleagues, as though a new life inspired their sinking age, and renewed in them their palmy vigor, should continue to traverse the continent, like the apostle 'taking pleasure in infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon them.' We have had, as yet, no sinecures in the high places of our Zion; and from what is past, there seems no special need to guard with dread suspicion against that misfortune. The spirit of our Superintendents has been strongly antagonist thereto; and if more than are needed for their duties were set apart for the office, we presume the evil would find a cure. The course of Dr. Fisk, and the voluntary surrender of his prerogatives by Bishop Roberts, in 1836, which the conference so suddenly (and perhaps wisely) declined to accept, warrant the hope that Bishops will not so multiply as to become an irreformable reproach, or an over-burden to our Zion. God grant, in his mercy, that like Roberts and his colleagues, we may retain in this high office men who shall continue abundant in labors, and who shall feel, '*it matters not where I fall so that I fall at my post.*'

"*Decision* was a trait in the character of Bishop Roberts. When necessary for public ends, he was immovable as a rock. Not that he was *obstinate*. It is a legal principle that 'the law minds not little things.' Neither did Bishop Roberts. He would not contend for trifles, nor for what merely concerned himself. There must be something which he deemed worthy to inspire decision, and then it was inspired. If the Church was concerned in some measure that seemed to threaten danger or expose to harm, he stood in the breach. Peaceable as he loved to be, and retiring and self-sacrificing as he usually was, when duty demanded, he was ready to 'speak with the enemy in the gate.' In our Church judicatories, when disorder arose and long forbearance proved unavailing, with what effect did he finally put forth his presiding power, to reprove

inattention, and command order in business and debate. Many will recollect examples in which he instantly hushed the confusion of the conference-room, and secured the prompt and decorous attention of every listless member to the subject in hand. Yet all this was generally done with a spirit and manner so conciliatory, as to provoke no other than the kindest feelings.

“Finally, though he was decided, he was also *discreet*. Like a judicious commander in the battle-field, he would throw himself into any posture of responsibility or danger, if some exigency rendered it his duty. But never would he do it wantonly, or for mere love of power. He invoked no episcopal prerogatives where the law of the Church did not prescribe their use. Like the high priest of the theocracy, he would, when permitted, gladly lay aside Urim and Thummim. He loved his *robe* of office only when he must execute its *functions*. He knew *when*, as well as *how*, ‘to be exalted and abased;’ and of the two, the latter was preferred.

“It follows that he was concentric in his official movements. He never plunged into spheres which did not need and claim him. He was as careful not to transcend, as he was prompt to approach the line of duty. Like the morning star, (for thus had Christ appointed his radiant goings forth,) he was content to shed a lustre on his own ordained circle, without impinging on remote or smaller bodies; for he remembered that all the stars are held ‘in His right hand;’ and that, if harmony prevails, each lends a grace to others, by diffusing another charm, or revealing another glory, in that moral hemisphere which does contain them all.

“Some who trace this record, may question the claim set up in behalf of Bishop Roberts. That he was a godly man they will scarcely deem doubtful. But, ‘as an elder and a Bishop, whence came his ordination? Had he the

true succession?' We anticipate such queries, on no other ground than because the times are fruitful of them. 'They seem, indeed, to be nearly all that certain soils can now produce. For in what is called the Church, many regions once productive, are now become cold and sterile, impoverished by we know not what imprudence of their cultivators. And when charity and zeal can no more grow, like fields bearing thorns, these exhausted soils produce things unwholesome; and sinister, proud challenges, like those above suggested, are sometimes scattered here and there, amongst many other sorts alike unsightly and unsavory. But if such a growth is met in this or that field, it were better not to curse, but if any thing reform it. And with this simple hope we will give a meek reply.

"There is a true succession. And he who is not in it can be no minister of Christ in any sphere. He is alien from all orders, whether of deacon or presbyter, till he floats in the current of this true succession. The only question is how to find it. Some will have it traced from the apostles, biographically, setting down names as links in this lengthened chain of priesthood. But this labor is all useless, for two conclusive reasons:

"1. It is so in *science*, for we have no means to come at certainty, or even probability, in regard to the necessary facts. We might nearly as well go to 'Thaddeus of Warsaw' for such a line of succession, as to more frequented annals. For one breach is confessed to be as fatal as a thousand; and that there are several breaches, is beyond all dispute.

"2. This labor is useless, because the Bible no where teaches that such a succession, could it be traced, has any virtue in it. It promises no such chain. But it 'provides a better thing for us.'

"If we wish to find what course the streamlet takes through half a dozen fields, we must not stand by the foun-

tain and judge by the pointings of its first outflows. Ascend the brow of the hill, and cast your eye over the adjoining meadows. Do you see yonder lines of rich, rank green, parted here and there by the willows? Note how it winds this way and that, first through one and then another man's inclosure. That line of fruitfulness represents the true succession. You need not trace the stream from its source. Cross those fields in any direction, and where you strike that line of luxuriance, you touch the true succession. These fields are the Churches. Examine them. Minutely scan that which claims to be '*the Church.*' Trace, if you can, its fruitful streams. With its various aspects before you turn to Methodism. See her converts in hundreds of thousands, springing 'up as willows by the water courses,' and then say whether Asbury, M'Kendree and Roberts, with all their fellow-laborers, whose ministrations were the channels through which these streams of life did flow, were without the gifts and callings of an approved apostleship."

We cannot pretend to improve the description of Bishop Roberts' character, by our gifted brother Hamline. We will, however, add a few remarks of our own, abridging what was prepared at greater length.

As a *man*, his personal appearance was peculiarly dignified, and commanded immediate respect from almost every observer. There was something so noble in his countenance, his manly form, his gait, that he was an object of respect wherever he went. His presence seemed to enlist the regard of observers at once.

His *manners*, too, were remarkably simple and dignified. In the habitation of the poor, or the wigwam of the Indian, he was at home; and all the inmates felt that their guest was one who could mingle with them at their fire-side, and be a fellow-partner in such things as they had. In the palaces of the rich, too, he was entirely at ease and passed through the

highest circles of life, when his lot was cast there, as one possessed of the most accomplished manners, yet without a shred of ostentation, or even without aiming at a single rule of politeness, except what flowed from the kindness of his heart, and his own good judgment of what was befitting in regard to time, place, persons and circumstances.

Who ever exhibited a more benevolent countenance than Bishop Roberts? And who ever possessed a kinder heart? None could fear to approach him. His face was never a lowering, cloudy sky. His eyes never flashed the lightning of angry petulance. His mouth never poured forth the withering strictures of superannuated churlishness, nor the rigid decrees of ecclesiastical despotism. But all were sure to gain the cheering sunshine of the good man's smile, the soothing influence of his tender sympathy, the mild and softening rebukes of his displeasure, or the instructive and entertaining communications of his discourse.

He was calmly intrepid. And though apparently not excelling in courage, he was never known to flinch from clear duty or sound principles.

And there was a native ore of wisdom and prudence in his possession, on which he drew on all occasions as from an inexhaustible store. Hence, an unwise decision was perhaps never announced by him. For where uncertainty met him, his great calmness, tempered by his prudence, prevented him from deciding at all. In matters of doubtful disputation, he never entered, but always kept within the precincts of propriety.

As a *Christian*, he possessed every mark and fruit which characterize the good man. He was truly an experimental Christian. Repentance, and faith, and love, and obedience, and humility, and even all the fruits of mature religion were matters of actual knowledge, experience and practice with him.

He was, also, an enlightened Christian. He well knew

his duty and its bounds. He was, therefore, neither a bigot nor a latitudinarian. He was, also, guided by overflowing generosity in the way he should go. To every good work, he contributed, at times, even beyond his means. Had he been rich, he would soon have become poor, by his benefactions to the cause of literature alone, even had there been no other demand on his benevolence.

As a minister of Christ, he possessed all those qualifications which make a man useful. He was eloquent, yet his eloquence consisted in great plainness, clear views, and a remarkable adaptation in his matter, manner and method, to the spiritual good of his hearers.

As a Bishop or Superintendent in the Church, he was endowed with those gifts which render a man peculiarly qualified for such a station. He never pressed matters of no importance, and laid no unnecessary restraints on any one; yet in all weighty points, he was firm and unyielding. When the interests of the Church, or the proper rights of individuals or bodies were concerned, he knew no rules but truth, justice and equity. These he observed sacredly. In matters of indifference, he never insisted on his prerogatives, but always yielded. In stationing the preachers, he invariably observed two episcopal rules: 1. He served the people. 2. And then the preachers. The general good always prevailed with him.

It might be difficult to fix on one single point of greatness in Bishop Roberts; nor can we mention a single eccentricity, which so often counterbalances great qualities. Yet he was no ordinary man, though we may find it difficult to assign him a place among the great men of the earth. Perhaps, had he known his own strength, his sphere of operation would have been more splendid than it was. And yet there was nothing equivocal or doubtful in him; and few men, so extensively known, were regarded in a more friendly manner by all classes of persons than he.

EPITAPH.

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SACRED

TO THE MEMORY OF THE

REV. ROBERT R. ROBERTS,

Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States
of America:

Born in Frederick county, Maryland, August 2, 1778;

And died in Lawrence county, Indiana, March 26, 1843.

He was elected to the Episcopal office in May, 1816; which holy
Vocation he sustained, unblamably, to the close of his life.

In this devoted servant of Christ were united, in an eminent degree,

The Scriptural qualifications of an Apostolic Bishop: sound in

The doctrines of Holy Scripture; deep in the experience

Of the grace of God; firm, yet gentle and conciliating

In the discharge of his official duties; apt to teach;

Patient in tribulation; abundant in labors;

Fervent in Spirit; given to hospitality.

He preached the Gospel of Christ, as an itinerant, with great success,

For more than forty years, embracing a period of

Extraordinary increase and prosperity in the Church,

To which his labors greatly contributed.

For almost twenty-seven years, he performed the arduous duties of

A General Superintendent, traveling constantly through the

United States and Territories, with that self-sacrificing

Devotion to the interests of the Church, which is

Worthy of a true successor of the Apostles.

He possessed a strong understanding and sound judgment.

In all the labors, sufferings, and perils of his long and eventful life, he

Manifested that evenness and unshaken fortitude of mind

Which are essential elements of real greatness.

His preaching was in the demonstration of the Spirit, and of power;

And in the final reckoning, it will appear that many

Were turned to righteousness by his ministry.

In his life and labors, he has left an illustrious example to those who

Survive him, and a sweet savor which will embalm him in

The memory of the ministers and people of his charge.

He rests from his labors, and his works follow him.





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